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ROMAN ECONOMIC CONDITIONS, By |
EDMUND HENRY OLIVER

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ROMAN ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

TO THE

CLOSE OF THE REPUBLIC



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ROMAN ECONOMIC CONDITIONS
TO THE
CLOSE OF THE REPUBLIC

BY

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LECTURER IN HISTORY, MCMASTER UNIVERSITY

This thesis which constitutes a portion of an investigation published in the University of Toronto Studies is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Faculty of Political Science, Columbia University.

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D.

PREFACE

This economic study of Rome was undertaken and practically completed in fulfilment of my obligations as Alexander Mackenzie Fellow in Political Science in the University of Toronto during the sessions 1902-1904. The subject was suggested by Professor Seligman's review of Henri Francotte's *L' Industrie dans la Grèce ancienne* in the *Political Science Quarterly* (Vol. xvi, No. 3.) The aim throughout has been to relate the subject to the primary sources. I have been careful, therefore, to read the original, and to verify references contained in the secondary, literature. Students who disagree with the conclusions which have been deduced will be grateful, I believe, that there has been thus collated the material from which conclusions may be drawn. I have not thought it expedient to encumber the foot-notes with an array of secondary literature. I am none the less greatly indebted to various writers for valuable hints and suggestions. In general I have considered it a sufficient acknowledgment of the assistance which an author has rendered me to include his work in my bibliography. No one, however, can investigate any period of Roman history without being indebted to the monumental works of Theodor Mommsen. Dureau de la Malle's *Économie politique des Romains* is somewhat antiquated, but the student of Roman economic history cannot afford to neglect it. Deloume's *Les Manieures d'argent à Rome* is exceedingly suggestive and brilliant, and I have used it with advantage. The quaint old volumes, *The Husbandry of the Ancients* by Adam Dickson, are a patient and laborious, if uncritical, study of Roman agriculture; I felt more at liberty to avail myself of his work because it is within the reach of comparatively few students. The writings of Marquardt, W. Warde Fowler, Lanciani, Belot, Halkin, Prax, Humbert, Waltzing, Cagnat, Ihne, and the *Antiquities* of Smith,

Adams, and Ramsay I found of special service. It is a matter of much regret that Mr. Greenidge's treatment of economic conditions in Rome did not reach me until this study was ready for the press; I have been unable to profit by his exceedingly able discussion of Rome's economic situation in the second century B.C.

Some criticism may be evoked by reason of the detailed treatment of agriculture and the extent to which I have used Varro, Columella and Pliny as my authorities. My desire primarily has been to depict conditions not less than to trace developments, and at the risk of being tedious I have aimed at giving full details. It will not be so easy to acquit these writers of the charge of bookishness. Cato smacks of the soil; Varro has the instincts of the antiquary, and one feels in his laboured expositions the influence of old manuscripts and the library. To keep the reader on his guard, I have refrained from expressing measures, dates and coins in modern terms, even when this is possible. The quaintness of some of Varro's precepts, his evidently unconscious exaggerations, may be laid aside, and yet I feel there will still be left something of worth. I quote Columella and Pliny for conditions under the Republic because methods of husbandry changed slowly. The descriptions, therefore, furnished by these authors of the processes of tillage, harvesting, threshing, etc., I consider a fairly adequate representation even of Republican methods. Their value for a sketch of economic conditions under the Republic exists only in so far as they provide us with a view of the fuller development of economic tendencies operative before the Empire.

I beg gratefully to tender my best thanks to Dr. George Willis Botsford, Adjunct-Professor of Ancient History, Columbia University, for his valuable criticisms and kindly sympathy manifested in the revision of the work. In the same University, Professor Edwin R. A. Seligman, LL.D., Ph.D., Professor of Political Economy and Finance, and Professor Munroe Smith, J.U.D., Professor of Roman Law and Comparative Jurisprudence, read the study in manuscript and offered suggestions of great value.

For the section which deals with Roman agriculture Dr. William Saunders, of Ottawa, Director of the Experimental Stations of the Dominion of Canada, gave me the benefit of his criticism and of his intimate acquaintance with modern methods. Professor Richard Davidson, M.A., Ph.D., of University College, Toronto, and Mr. John S. Carstairs, M.A., of Harbord St. Collegiate Institute, Toronto, rendered valuable service in forwarding the revision. To Professor George M. Wrong, M.A., Professor of Modern History in the University of Toronto, whose kindness rendered the research possible, and to Mr. H. H. Langton, M.A., Librarian, and Editor of the University of Toronto Studies, whose co-operation has never failed me, I am under great obligation.

But I should be altogether lacking in gratitude if I failed to express my appreciation of the assistance rendered me by Professor William S. Milner, M.A., Associate-Professor of Latin and Ancient History in University College, Toronto. That I was able to undertake and complete this investigation is entirely due to his inspiration as a teacher. His profound knowledge of Roman history has given a stimulus second only to that afforded by his personal friendship and unabated sympathy.

E. H. O.

TORONTO, CANADA,
November 30th, 1906.

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BOOK I.

FROM EARLIEST TIMES TO THE REVOLUTION

§ I. THE PASTORAL STAGE

It was the firm conviction of many Roman writers that in the evolution of the human race pastoral conditions preceded the agricultural stage.¹ One of their commonest sources of satisfaction, moreover, was that the Roman people had not been out of conformity with this course of development.² Accordingly their accounts of the origins of Rome are embellished with a wealth of pastoral allusions. They maintained that the peninsula had received its name because "*Italia*" was a "land of cattle."³ It was the rich pasturage, they say, which tempted Hercules to linger in the neighbourhood of Rome,⁴ and brought him into conflict with a shepherd, Cacus, who straightway appealed for assistance to fellow-shepherds.⁵ It was in a shepherd's life upon the lonely hills that Metabus, tyrant of Privernum, sought consolation when banished with his daughter, Camilla.⁶ Pastoral, also, were the conditions which Aeneas found in Italy. A sow with a brood of thirty young was his first omen in this land of promise.⁷ The possession of five flocks and as many herds made Galaesus the richest man in all Ausonia.⁸ By tracing the descent of

¹Varro, *R.R.*, II, i, 4 ; Col., *R.R.*, VI, *Praef.*; Varro, *R.R.*, III, i, 7.

²Varro, *R.R.*, II, i, 9 ; compare also Florus, I, xxii ; II, ii ; III, xii.

³Varro, *R.R.*, II, i, 9 ; Ibid. II, v, 3 ; Dion Cass., *Hist. Rom.*, ἐκ τῶν πρὸ τοῦ Δς, 4. 2.

⁴Dion. of Hal., *R.A.*, I, xxxix ; Livy, I, vii, 4.

⁵Livy, I, vii, 5 ; Ibid. I, vii, 7 ; Ibid. I, vii, 9.

⁶Verg., *Aen.*, xi, 569.

⁷Varro, *R.R.*, II, iv, 18 ; Verg., *Aen.*, viii, 82 ; Dion Cass., *Hist. Rom.*, ἐκ τῶν πρὸ τοῦ Δς, 4. 5-6.

⁸Verg., *Aen.*, vii, 537.

Latinus, shepherd king¹ of the Laurentes, from Faunus,² god of shepherds,³ the Roman writers assigned to this pastoral economy a very remote antiquity.

Peculiarly pastoral is the whole setting of the conventional narrative of Rome's foundation.⁴ A shepherd, Faustulus, master of the herds of Amulius, found and trained Romulus and Remus,⁵ who, in turn, grew up to be shepherds and the associates of shepherds.⁶ When in a contest for grazing grounds Remus was captured, the shepherds of Numitor were opposed by shepherds whom Romulus led to the rescue.⁷ Further, the Roman writers assert that it was the rich pasturage and the abundant supply of water that attracted the Albans to the Roman hills.⁸ They picture to us the distress occasioned by the barrenness of the cattle in the reign of Romulus,⁹ and hint that, in the time of Tarquinius Priscus, shepherds still formed an element in the state.¹⁰

This deeply rooted belief on the part of the Romans, that the early stages of Italian and Roman development were associated with a pastoral economy, is of great importance, not because it is a tradition which transmits to us an actual historical fact, but because at the time when this belief had its birth there still survived from remote antiquity institutions which the Romans of that day understood far better than we can understand them now and from which they were led to infer that when these institutions were young their ancestors were shepherds.

An examination of the religious and secular institutions and of the archaeological remains of Rome seems to establish the validity of their claims. From this, however, it must

¹Verg., *Aen.*, vii, 485.

²Verg., *Aen.*, vii, 47.

³Hor., *Carm.*, I, xvii.

⁴Varro, *R.R.*, II, i, 4.

⁵Livy, I, iv, 6 ; Varro, *R.R.*, II, i, 9 ; Strabo, *Geog.*, V, c. 229 ; Dion Cass., *Hist. Rom.*, ἐκ τῶν πρὸ τοῦ Δς, 4, 13.

⁶Dion Cass., *Hist. Rom.*, ἐκ τῶν πρὸ τοῦ Δς, 4, 14 ; Livy I, iv, 9.

⁷Dion. of Hal., *R.A.*, I, lxxix ; Plut., *Rom.*, vii, 1 ; Livy I, v, 7.

⁸Dion. of Hal., *R.A.*, II, ii.

⁹Plut., *Rom.*, xxiv, 1.

¹⁰Livy, I, xl, 5.

not be inferred that at any time the Romans were unacquainted with agriculture. In a more or less imperfect form, agriculture, on a small scale, probably has existed from earliest times side by side with pastoral pursuits. Rigid classifications are not applicable to economic conditions. To say that a pastoral economy existed at that remote period, then, would merely signify that, at the time, pastoral interests predominated.

In Roman religion there are many customs and institutions which appear to be pastoral activities crystallized into a ritual. In the conservative atmosphere of religion what has been incidental comes to be regarded as essential, and the practice which the limitations of primitive life have rendered necessary becomes a sacred institution. For instance, in sacred rites, milk, not wine, was used.¹ That this requirement was no mere excrescence on the ritual, but an essential element of worship, would seem to be indicated by the fact that even when wine was brought into a temple it was called milk, and the name "honey-dish" (*mellarium*) for some reason was given to the vase which contained it.² This remarkable feature of Roman worship would receive an explanation, if we regarded it as a survival of the simple life of the herdsman. It would naturally be difficult or impossible for him to obtain wine, no matter how meritorious in the sight of the gods; whereas milk, his own most important means of subsistence, would seem the fitting medium for communion with the divinity.

The Vestal Virgins were an ancient and mysterious institution.³ They kept the holy fire burning continually.⁴ Whenever the sacred flame by chance expired, or was extinguished, as happened each spring,⁵ it was kindled anew by the beams of the sun or by rubbing together pieces of

¹Pliny, *N.H.*, xiv, 88 ; Varro, *R.R.*, II, xi, 5 ; Verg., *Ecl.*, v, 66 ; compare also Plut., *Quaest. Rom.*, lvii.

²Plut., *Quaest. Rom.*, xx ; Macrob., *Saturnal.*, I, xii, 25.

³Livy, I, iii, 11 ; Dion Cass., *Hist. Rom.*, ἐκ τῶν πρὸ τοῦ Δς, 4. 12

⁴Dion. of Hal., *R.A.*, III, lxvii.

⁵Macrob., *Saturnal.*, I, xii [5] 6 ; Ovid, *Fast.*, iii, 141.

the wood of the holy tree.¹ It would be rash to dogmatize as to the origin of this institution. And yet it, too, would seem to be the petrified and venerated survival of a natural set of conditions in a pastoral age. For when fire can be obtained only from the friction of pieces of wood, every care is taken to preserve the coals. While the father and brothers tended the flocks in the fields, and the mother was busied with other duties about the tent or the rude hut, the most natural guardian of the fire would surely be the daughter. That the fire was allowed to die out once each year may be a reminiscence of the time when the Romans each spring broke up camp to shift to new and ungrazed feeding-grounds. We must not forget, however, that this explanation is conjectural, that others prefer to give the Virgins a Greek origin.

At the festival of the *Lupercalia* the Romans sacrificed dogs and goats.² They themselves were convinced that this institution had its birth among a pastoral and rustic people.³ To purify and to fertilize were the fundamental aims of its rude ceremonies.⁴ In later times the ceremony of purifying and fertilizing was applied to women, but the original application seems to have been to the flocks of a pastoral people.⁵ This explanation of the *Lupercalia*, which Lanciani offers,⁶ has at least the merit of being plausible. To communicate to cattle and sheep the strong sexual instinct of the dog and the goat by means of sacrifice was a desire natural enough in a simple herdsman.

Nor do the rites of the *Palilia* (or *Parilia*), a festival in honour of Pales, the tutelary divinity of shepherds, less evidently take us back to an early shepherd life.⁷ The participants in this ceremonial aimed at the purification of their persons and flocks.⁸ They sprinkled the sheepfold with water

¹Festus, 78, s.v. "ignis"; Plut., *Numa*, ix, 6.

²Plut., *Rom.*, xxi, 4; *Ibid.*, xxi, 5.

³Cic., *Pro Coel.*, ii; Plut., *Caes.*, lxi, 1.

⁴Plut., *Rom.*, xxi, 3; Ovid, *Fast.*, ii, 31; Serv., *ad Aen.*, viii, 343; Varro, *De Ling. Lat.*, vi, 34; Plut., *Quaest. Rom.*, lxviii. †

⁵Serv., *ad Aen.*, viii, 343; Plut., *Rom.*, xxi, 5; *Ibid.*, *Caes.*, lxi, 2.

⁶*Ancient Rome in the Light of Recent Excavations*, p. 36.

⁷Varro, *De Ling. Lat.*, vi, 15; Festus, s.v. "Pales."

⁸Ovid, *Fast.*, iv, 785; *Ibid.*, iv, 725.

and decorated it with green boughs. Shepherds swept the stables with brooms, burned sulphur, pine and olive branches, laurel and straw. A salutary purification was effected as the shepherds with their flocks thrice passed through the fire.¹ Millet, milk, and other articles of food were offered up. The worshippers concluded with a prayer to Pales. Purification was the theme of their liturgy, as well as the motive of their activities. All evil they desired to be averted from their flocks and from themselves, whether they had unwittingly trespassed on holy ground, or caused the nymphs or a faunus to flee before human eyes, or tampered with the branches of a sacred grove to help a sick ewe, or disturbed the holy fountains, or looked upon the wood-nymphs. In this worship—the worship, no doubt, of the early Italian shepherds,—“*Da veniam culpae*” and “*Pelle procul morbos : valeant hominesque gregesque*” express the two most salient motives of their petitions—the fear of having unknowingly performed some act which might bring divine wrath upon them, and the earnest desire to promote the welfare of their flocks and of themselves.²

The Roman writers associated the birth-day of Rome with the *Palilia*, a proof that the Romans themselves regarded the institution as ancient. It does not, however, establish the antiquity of the festival.³ But evidence of the extreme antiquity of the worship of Pales, and therefore, probably, of the early existence of the pastoral economy, is found in the fact that the Romans can never positively determine whether Pales is “*deus*” or “*dea*.”⁴ This fluctuation of sex Mr. Fowler considers a sure indication of antiquity.⁵ The existence, therefore, of two genders for “*Pales*” recalls a period—very remote—when the suppliant, lest he should compromise his suit by a flaw in the formula of his petition, addresses the

¹Ovid, *Fast.*, iv, 727 ; *Ibid.*, iv, 735.

²Ovid, *Fast.*, iv, 743 seq.

³Varro, *R.R.*, II, i, 9 ; Ovid, *Fast.*, iv, 801 ; Propertius, V, iv, 73 ; Plut., *Rom.*, xii, 1 ; Vell. Pater., *Compend. of Rom. Hist.*, I, viii.

⁴Servius, *ad Verg. Georg.*, iii, 1 ; Arnob., *Adv. Gent.*, iii, 40.

⁵*The Roman Festivals*, p. 67.

deity of undetermined sex, with the invocation, "Be thou god, or be thou goddess, to whom I perform this rite."¹

■ ■ In his time Dionysius regarded the festival of the *Palilia* as inferior to none. This fact suggests how intimately the Romans at one period had connected the worship of Pales with the welfare of the state. They advanced beyond the pastoral economy; the state outgrew its dependence on Pales; but owing to the conservative spirit of religion there was no readjustment in the relative importance of the various elements of worship.² How else can we explain the prominence given to swine than as a survival from pastoral times? At the sacred mysteries of Ceres, at weddings and at the conclusion of a treaty a pig was slain.³

All these religious institutions had their origin, it would seem, at a period when shepherds were the predominant element in the state. But many secular customs and institutions also bear witness to the existence of a pastoral economy. For instance, the strong man who has seized the pasturage takes for his emblem of leadership a handful of hay twisted about a pole.⁴ Moreover, in the earliest times wealth consisted wholly of cattle; and the oldest means of exchange was sheep and oxen;⁵ for when fines formerly paid in sheep and oxen came to be paid in money, there already obtained between the sheep and the ox a definite relation of value.⁶ A connection between this primitive standard of value and money may be found in the figure of an ox stamped upon the Italian *aes signatum*, and money, itself, was called "pecunia," from "pecus" (cattle).⁷

In this connection the elaborate Roman ceremony for declaring war and for concluding treaties is of interest. When

¹Thus it was expressly forbidden at Rome to inquire whether the tutelary deity was male or female—Plut., *Quaest. Rom.*, lxi; compare Cato, *R.R.*, 139; C.I.L., I, 632.

²Dion. of Hal., *R.A.*, I, lxxxviii.

³Varro, *R.R.*, II, iv, 9.

⁴Plut., *Rom.*, viii, 6; Ovid, *Fast.*, iii, 114.

⁵Cic., *De Rep.*, II, ix, 16; Festus, s.v. "*peculatus*."

⁶Varro, *R.R.*, II, i, 9; A. Gell., *Noct. Att.*, XI, i, 2. Festus, s.v. "*maximam multam*"; Plut., *Poplic.*, xi, 3.

⁷Varro, *R.R.*, II, i, 11; Pliny, *N.H.*, xxxiii, 43; Plut., *Poplic.*, xi, 4; Plut., *Quaest. Rom.*, xli; Hill, *Greek and Roman Coins*, pp. 45, 46.

satisfaction was demanded from an enemy it was the custom to despatch to his territories an ambassador on whose head a cord fastened a covering of wool.¹ To declare war the *fetialis* bore to the frontiers of the enemy a spear tipped with iron or smeared with blood, and scorched at the end. Then, in the presence of not fewer than three grown men, uttering a fixed formula, he hurled his spear into their territory.² In the war with Alba, the *fetialis*, who received from King Tullus the commission to conclude a peace with the *pater patratus* of the Alban people, thus addressed his king, "I require herbs of thee, O King." Thereupon the king replied, "See that the grass thou takest is undefiled." The *fetialis* then brought clean blades of grass from the citadel. "O King," he continued, "dost thou constitute me the royal messenger of the Roman people of the Quirites, with my utensils and my companions?" "I do," the King responded, "and may it bring no dishonour upon myself and the Roman people of the Quirites."

In addressing the Alban people, the *pater patratus* concluded, "From these terms the Roman people will not be the first to withdraw; if they shall have withdrawn first, either by public council or through evil treachery, then do thou, great Jupiter, so strike the Roman people as I shall strike this swine here this day, and strike thou so much the more terribly as thou hast more power and might." Thereupon he smote the pig with a flint stone and the Albans did the same.³

The remote antiquity of these customs in which the *fetialis* figures so prominently is proved by the use of the flint stone for a knife. The whole ritual, it is probable, originated in the shepherd quarrels of the stone age. The *fetialis* is, doubtless, a shepherd deputed to arrange for peace or war. In requiring clean grass he is demanding an emblem of his authority. The pasturage of their flocks—the most valued of their possessions—the shepherds offer to their companions as guarantee of their support. The wool used by the ambas-

¹Livy, I, xxxii, 6.

²Livy, I, xxxii, 12 *et* 13.

³Livy, I, xxiv; IX, v, 3.

sador is simply a portion of a sheepskin, the natural costume of a shepherd. To destroy the pasture of a pastoral people is to injure them at the most vulnerable point, to deprive them of their chief means of subsistence. Accordingly, at the outbreak of every struggle between herdsmen, both combatants take every precaution to preserve their own grass and make every effort to burn that of their foe. On the frontiers, therefore, watchmen are stationed to preserve the pasture from the enemy. It is probably to them that the *fetialis* addresses himself when he assumes the aggressive by discharging the charred spear into the territory of the enemy. The "*hasta praeusta*" may even be the survival of fire-brands hurled by a primitive pastoral people into the pasturage of their neighbour foes.

Archaeological remains likewise, it will readily be granted, are of the utmost importance. Antemnae is situated on the same bank of the Tiber as Rome, on the same road, *Salaria Vetus*, and is distant less than four miles from the city. Excavations in 1882-1883 indicate three gates, one leading to the river and to the springs, one to the highway, and another to the cemetery and pasture lands.¹ The site of the huts of the Antemnates is marked by a hard-trodden, coal-coloured floor within a ring of stones. The point worthy of note, however, is that adjoining each hut is an enclosure or sheep-fold. The area within the walls is far in excess of the space requisite for the inhabitants alone. In all probability each night the ancient Antemnates drove their cattle and sheep into these enclosures. It is hardly to be imagined that conditions were very different on the Palatine. Here, too, we find each family provided with an agellus and a sheep-fold. "Here we have the isolated hill protected by cliffs, by water, and by a circuit of walls; the neck of the Velia connecting it with the tableland of the Esquiline; the gate leading to the river and springs (*Romanula*), that leading to the pasture fields and cemeteries (*Mugonia*), and a third descending to the Vallis Murtia; the walls and cisterns within the fortifications and other such

¹Lanciani, *Ruins and Excavations of Ancient Rome*, p. 112, to which I am indebted for the material of this paragraph.

characteristics of the age." This is but an illustration of the archaeological discoveries which point to the conclusion that the Romans were originally a race of shepherds.

And finally, philological proofs are not wanting to establish the theory of a pastoral age in Rome. For example, the gate leading to the pasture lands of the Oppian received its name, "*Mugionis*," from the lowing of the cattle (*mugire*);¹ and the appellation "*Goats' Marsh*," applied to a district of Rome, indicates an early familiarity with the goat.²

A consideration of the above facts will lead to the conclusions, (1) that Roman writers attributed a pastoral economy to the earliest stages of their city's (or country's) history; (2) that customs and institutions, religious and secular, seem to confirm this belief; (3) that the unearthing of relics of a pastoral age and the survival of pastoral names to denote certain gates and districts, definitely localize for us a pastoral economy on the Palatine.

§ 2. AGRICULTURE

It must not be forgotten that during the pastoral stage there was some tillage. Gradually, however, agriculture encroached upon pasturage, so that the citizens came to derive their support more and more from the cultivation of the soil. How long a period was required to produce a preponderance of agricultural pursuits and interests it is impossible to say. Certain regulations, however, assigned by the Romans themselves to King Numa evidently mark this transitional stage. To encourage the pruning of vines, for instance, men were forbidden to offer to the gods wine from an unpruned vine; and to foster the cultivation of cereals sacrifice without meal was prohibited.³ The growing importance of husbandry is further indicated by the institution of games to Mars, in primitive times preeminently a god of agriculture, and to Robigo, the spirit who worked in the mildew.⁴ The legislation

¹Varro, *De Ling. Lat.*, v, 164; Dion. of Hal., *R.A.*, II, 1.

²Plut., *Numa*, II, 1.

³Plut., *Numa*, xiv, 3, 4.

⁴Tertullian, *De spectac.*, v; Pliny, *N.H.*, xviii, 29.

attributed to Servius, however, limits for us the period of transition to husbandry. At the time of his enactments agriculture was well established; landholding had become a requisite for military service.¹

What may, perhaps, be additional evidence of a distinction between the pastoral and agricultural economy is a line of cleavage drawn by early Roman law in the XII Tables between *pecunia* and *familia*. Ihering claims that *pecunia familiaque* is equivalent to *bona*; that *pecunia* does not signify money but pastoral possessions, as *familia* represents agricultural wealth.²

Nor was this early agriculture unimportant. Mars, the father of "Romulus, founder of the city," the peculiar god of the Romans, better than any other deity represents in an ideal manner the characteristics of Rome's early inhabitants. Originally he is not the god of war, but of growth—the deity that protects agriculture. He brings health to oxen, and from the husbandman accepts gifts of spelt, fat, and wine. The rites with which he was worshipped bear evident traces of an agricultural origin.³ To him as god of husbandry is dedicated the month of sprouting vegetation.⁴ Again, when the fields needed purification the animals of the farm—pig (*sus*), sheep (*ovis*), and ox (*taurus*)—were led around its boundaries. This ceremony remained the essential feature of the *suovitaurilia*. And never in times of distress did the husbandmen forget to petition Mars to avert disease and barrenness, to grant increase of fruit, corn, wine and copse.⁵

Another relic of the early importance of agriculture is seen in the College of the *Fratres Arvales*, which used to assemble at the fifth milestone of the *Via Campana*.⁶ The object of their rites, Varro maintains, was to render the fields fertile.⁷

¹Livy, I, xlii, 5; Cic., *De Rep.*, ii, 22.

²Compare *res Mancipi* and *res nec Mancipi*; see Ihering, *Entwicklungsgeschichte des römischen Rechts*, pp. 81-91; Table v; Livy III, lv.

³Cato, *R.R.*, 83.

⁴Varro, *De Ling. Lat.*, vi, 33.

⁵Cato, *R.R.*, 141.

⁶Strabo, *Geog.*, 230.

⁷Varro, *De Ling. Lat.*, v, 85.

However, the emblem of brotherhood—a wreath of corn tied with a white fillet—the very name of the College and the exclusion of iron from their ceremonies, would seem to bespeak for the *Fratres Arvales* an agricultural origin.¹

Furthermore, in establishing colonies the Romans used to plow a furrow with an ox and a cow—a custom which some writers believe to have existed at the foundation of Rome, and which at least indicated that at the institution of the practice agriculture had attained considerable development.²

To these considerations may be added the fact that the Roman calendar is a record of the life of a husbandman. Mr. Fowler has shown how it prescribes for every season its proper duties.³ For example, *Martius* is the month dedicated to Mars, the god of vegetation; *Aprilis*, the opening month; *Maius*, the month of growth; *Junius*, the month of maturity; Again, the days from June 5th to June 15th are *nefasti*. On the latter date the *Aedes Vestae* is swept, the refuse removed, and immediately the *tempus nefastum* is at an end.⁴ This time is, without doubt, the period which immediately precedes the harvest and the gathering of the first fruits, when the granaries are swept, the barns put in order, the receptacles made ready. The cessation of judicial and other public business during these “*dies nefasti*” is designed to give full opportunity to attend to harvest preparations. The races of the *Consualia*, too,—a harvest festival on August 21st—are simply a relic of the rivalry among primitive farmers gathering in their crops.⁵ As generations went on the discrepancy between the season and the object of the festival would become more and more absurd, and neither the festivals designed for the harvest fell in summer, nor those for the vintage in autumn.⁶

¹A. Gell., *Noct. Att.*, VII, vii, 8 ; Pliny, *N.H.*, xviii, 6. For other indications see also Pauly-Wissowa, II, 1472.

²Servius, *ad Verg. Aen.*, v, 755 ; Varro, *R.R.*, II, i, 9 ; Plut., *Rom.*, xi, 2 ; Plut., *Quaest. Rom.*, xxvii ; Dion Cass., *Hist. Rom.*, ἐκ τῶν πρὸ τοῦ Δς, 5, 2, Col., *R.R.*, vi, *Praef.*, 7.

³*The Roman Festivals*, *passim*.

⁴Varro, *De Ling. Lat.*, vi, 32.

⁵Dion. of Hal., *R.A.*, II, xxxi ; Festus, p. 148.

⁶Suet., *J. Caes.*, xl.

The close association, or identification, of religion and agriculture suggests the veneration in which husbandry was held.¹ The gods are intimately concerned with the things of the farm; they protect the fields, nourish the crops, and send the rain. Pan is the guardian of sheep; Minerva, the creator of the olive; and Silvanus, the god of the cypress.² On the Kalends, the Ides, the Nones, and the holy days, the master enjoined upon the *vilicus* to place a crown upon the hearth and offer prayer to the household deity.³ The most venerable Roman form of marriage, *confarreatio*, is derived from the cultivation of corn.⁴ And, finally, the messengers who summoned the senators to the senate house were called "travellers" (*viatores*) because in early times the senators were engaged in the fields.⁵

From the period of its displacement of the pastoral economy until the Punic wars, the relation of agriculture to the state was most vital. In fact, if we except the capitalist of the city, the husbandman furnished the sole basis to Roman economics. The two pillars of the Roman state were the farm beyond the city walls and the coffers of the rich capitalists within. Rome's writers were deeply sensible of Rome's debt to agriculture and held it in high esteem. Cicero declares,—“Of all the productive arts, there is none better, none more fertile, none sweeter, and none worthier of a free man”.⁶ Again, there was no higher eulogy for a citizen than to

¹The idea of an intimate relation between agriculture and religion was not peculiar to the Romans, nor to remote antiquity. The same conception is found in the *Corpus Juris Canonici*, which voiced the Catholic economic theory of the Middle Ages. Says Ingram (*History of Political Economy*, p. 27) : “Agriculture and handiwork are viewed as legitimate modes of earning food and clothing ; but trade is regarded with disfavour, because it was held almost certainly to lead to fraud ; of agriculture it was said, “*Deo non displicet* ;” but of the merchant, “*Deo placere non potest*.” Compare also the maxim which Gibbon (*Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, i, 201, ed. Bury), quotes from the Zend Avesta : “He who sows the ground with care and diligence acquires a greater stock of religious merit than he could gain by the repetition of ten thousand prayers.”

²Verg., *Georg.* i, 16.

³Cato, *R.R.*, 143.

⁴Pliny, *N.H.*, xviii, 10.

⁵Pliny, *N.H.*, xviii, 21 ; Cic., *Cato Maior*, 56 ; Col., *R.R.*, I, *Praef.*, 18.

⁶Cic., *De Offic.*, I, 42, 3. The Greeks also were very partial to agriculture : βέλτιστος γὰρ δῆμος ὁ γεωργικὸς ἐστίν (Aristotle, *Politics*, viii, 1318, b).

be called a good farmer,¹ and rural occupations were held in higher regard than those of the city.² Cato likewise bestows his most enthusiastic admiration on the man who has redeemed his ancestral farm,³ and he considers that age the most fortunate in which agriculture has been pursued with success.⁴ In general Rome held agriculture in the highest esteem,⁵ and traced to it the names of many influential families and gentes.⁶ In early times Rome's eminent statesmen and generals were summoned from the plough⁷; and at a later period, to teach agriculture became an occupation worthy of her best citizens.⁸ It was to her agriculture, in fact, that her wise men attributed the greatness of their city.⁹

Early Roman agriculture consisted largely in the production of cereals. Spelt, for centuries one of the staple foods of the Romans, must have been cultivated over a large area.¹⁰ Italy, if not Latium, produced an excellent white wheat, which, exported to Greece, probably by the Greeks of South Italy, was there held in high repute by the contemporaries of Sophocles.¹¹ It is, therefore, probable that throughout Rome's early history sufficient grain was produced to support her citizens at home and in the field.¹² The olive, on the other hand, is not native to Italy. Roman writers tell us that it was not found there in the reign of Tarquinius Priscus. However, the importance of the olive in early Rome was not great.¹³ But the vine is met with in Italy from time immemorial. For, when the Greeks came to Italy, some gave it the name of

¹Cato, *R.R.*, *Praef.*, 3; Dion. of Hal., *R.A.*, II, lxiii.

²Varro, *R.R.*, II, 1, 1.

³Plut., *Cato Maior*, 8, 10.

⁴*Catonis Oratorum Reliquiae*, xxiii: *De lustris sui felicitate*.

⁵Pliny, *N.H.*, xviii, 5.

⁶Varro, *R.R.*, II, 1, 9; Pliny, *N.H.*, xviii, 10; Plut., *Quaest. Rom.*, xli.

⁷Col., *R.R.*, i, *Praef.*, 13 et 18; Pliny, *N.H.*, xviii, 19; Seneca, *Epist.* xiii, 1, 5; xviii, 20; Dion Cass., *Hist. Rom.*, ἐκ τῶν πρὸ τοῦ Δς, 23.2; Val. Max., *Memor.*, IV, iv, 6; VIII, xiii, 1; Cic., *Pro S. R. Amer.*, 18, 50.

⁸Pliny, *N.H.*, xviii, 22.

⁹Verg., *Georg.*, ii, 532.

¹⁰Pliny, *N.H.*, xviii, 12, 65; Dion. of Hal., *R.A.*, II, xxv.

¹¹Pliny, *N.H.*, xviii, 12, 65.

¹²Varro, *R.R.*, III, i, 4; Pliny, *N.H.*, xviii, 15; Tac., *Ann.*, xii, 43.

¹³Pliny, *N.H.*, xv, 1.

Olivetia, "wine-land".¹ Yet wine must have been scarce in early times; for in libations milk was used; by a law of Numa the Romans were forbidden to sprinkle the funeral pyre with wine; the king encouraged the pruning of vines, and women were not allowed to drink wine.² The production of good wine indeed does not precede the decline in the cultivation of cereals.³

Agriculture in short, became the very life of the Romans, the mainstay of the state. Their dependence upon husbandry they recognized; and rustic life they venerated as older than urban.⁴ That Rome at the expulsion of the kings was a far advanced agricultural state is indicated by the protection granted to husbandry by the stringent regulations of the Twelve Tables. During the period of struggle from the first consuls to the Punic wars agriculture made considerable progress.⁵

§ 3. INDEPENDENT ECONOMY OF THE FUNDUS

While the course of economic development lay in the direction away from isolation and segregation, yet it could be said of any one time considered by itself that ancient life, almost unconsciously perhaps, aspired to self-sufficiency. The perfect good of Aristotle must be a self-sufficient good.⁶ To be self-contained was an ideal, and yet the desire was to a certain extent realized. The boast of Hippias at Olympia that he was ignorant of no part of any art, that he had with his own hands made his own clothes, was no less than the early Romans could have said of themselves.⁷ The husbandman must not only till his fields, but be a soldier on campaigns as well.⁸ For state, for farm, for individual, completeness in self,—an ideal essentially different from that of our own

¹Strabo, *Geog.*, v, c. 209.

²Pliny, *N.H.*, xiv, 88; Plut., *Quest. Rom.*, vi et xx.

³Pliny, *N.H.*, xviii, 24.

⁴Varro, *R.R.*, III, i, 1.

⁵Pliny, *N.H.*, xviii, 12.

⁶Arist., *Nic. Eth.*, I, vii, 6 et 8; IV, iii, 33.

⁷Cic., *De Or.*, iii, 32, 127.

⁸Dion. of Hal., *R. A.*, II, xxviii.

more developed, and highly specialized social life—was, to both Greeks and Romans, the greatest good.¹

Not profit, therefore, but the independent economy of the *fundus*, or group which constituted the household on the farm, was the natural goal of Roman husbandry. In the management of the farm the needs of the individual household were considered, and within the *fundus* the work of each person was supplementary to that of some other individual within the same *fundus*,—while the father and sons ploughed the fields, the women spun the wool, made the clothing, and baked the bread.²

We find it less expensive, and at the same time less laborious, to produce more of a commodity than will meet our immediate requirements, in order to receive in exchange for our surplus the excess of a commodity which our neighbour is better fitted to produce. The Roman, however, produced enough of each commodity to satisfy his needs. His policy was never to buy what his farm could produce.³ Cato's statement is characteristic of the times,—“The father of a family should sell, not purchase.”⁴ Nor is Pliny's remark concerning the ancient Romans less apposite,—“Their greatest care was to do things at the smallest *expense*.”⁵ The farmer's ideal was independence.

It is the *patria potestas* which best exemplifies the independent economy of the *fundus*. All-powerful within the household, the *pater familias* is not less all-powerful in regard to the external relations of the home.⁶ If he no longer resides on the *fundus* the *vilicus* becomes his representative. Then writers on agriculture insist that the *vilicus* should be the sole intermediary with neighbours,—in truth, none save the *vilicus* and a companion should leave the farm. They would have

¹Dion. of Hal., *R.A.*, I, xxxvi.

²C.I.L. 1007 ; Livy, I, lvii, 8 ; Plut., *Rom.*, xv, 4 ; Verg, *Aen.*, viii, 409 ; Pliny, *N.H.*, xviii, 107. Augustus seldom wore any garment but what was made by the hands of his wife, sister, daughter or granddaughter.—Suet., *C. Aug.*, lxxiii.

³Pliny, *N.H.*, xviii, 40 ; Varro, *R.R.*, II, iv, 3 ; I, xxii, 1.

⁴Cato, *R.R.*, 2 (sec. 7).

⁵*N.H.*, xviii, 5 et 39.

⁶Cato, *R.R.*, 143 ; Dion. of Hal., *R.A.*, II, xxvi.

it independent.¹ This ideal brought marine traffic into the hands of the agricultural class; for the farmer exported his produce in his own ship. All the operations required to transform raw material into products needed on a farm were carried on within its confines. No special industrial enterprise on anything like a large scale could have existed. For although specialization undoubtedly obtained within the range of a household as special skill qualified certain members to pursue particular occupations, still the large variety of needs among even a primitive agricultural people prevented an individual from occupying himself with one task exclusively.

In considering this endeavour of the ancients to have the economy of their *fundus* self-contained, we should not forget that it is an ideal of our modern life, too, not to have our happiness and our existence dependent on the caprice of our neighbours. But the present organization of society renders a policy of complete isolation vain and impracticable. Nor are we to imagine that this ideal was ever quite attained even in the most ancient times, for no individual, no community can exist complete in itself for any considerable period. The first formal breakdown in this system,—if it can be called a system,—was assigned by the Romans themselves to the reign of Numa. To them this reign of Numa is curiously significant of change. Not merely is settled agriculture well begun, but division of labour in the trades is simultaneously outlined. Whatever may be the significance of their assigning this date for the modifications of the old conditions, it is clear that the time came when the single family found itself unable to satisfy its own growing needs. Outside the family there sprang up arts, which demanded a special aptitude and considerable training. This process, brought about unquestionably by a gradual evolution, the Roman writers express in the formal language :—"The distribution of Numa was made according to the several trades of musicians, goldsmiths, masons, dyers, shoemakers, tanners, braziers and potters."²

¹Col., *R.R.*, I, viii, 12 ; Varro, *R.R.*, I, xvi, 5.

²Plut., *Numa*, xvii, 2.

It is impossible, even if it were desirable, sharply to define the period of the independent *fundus*. There never was a time when the system had absolute sway; there never will come a time when people will not consume articles of their own production. By the statement that throughout the regal and, to a diminishing degree, during a great part of the Republican period there existed an independent economy of the *fundus*, we mean simply that to an extent greater than at any later time the products of the farm did not pass into general circulation, and that an organized system of distribution was lacking.

§ 4. TRADES

The noblest men in the state deemed it a high calling to till the soil; but a trade, representing an occupation beyond the limits of the *fundus*, never was considered the true business of a good citizen either in Greece or at Rome.¹ The skill of the workman, however, was undoubtedly highly esteemed in Homeric Greece.² It is probable that in Rome also so long as members of a household performed the work of the trades within the *fundus*, and solely for the needs of that particular household, no stigma attached to the labour itself. But in later times the association of trades with a professional class and with aliens degraded the handicrafts in the eyes of the Roman. For in states where the independent economy of the *fundus* was not only an ideal, but also, to a high degree, a reality, handicrafts furnished the only means of livelihood open to strangers; and accordingly it was chiefly aliens who became craftsmen. But while to the husbandman a period of leisure is left between seed-time and harvest, which might be devoted to the service of the state, in trades, on the other hand, there was no intermission to the labour, no intrusion of larger and less selfish interests. As slavery increased, certain occupations were more and more

¹Cic., *De Off.*, I, 42. Thus to fight in war was a prerogative of the "civis Romanus." When craftsmen and artificers engage in warfare it is an exception which Livy (VIII, xx, 4) deems worthy of special mention; Dion. of Hal., *R.A.*, IX, xxv; II, xxviii; Arist., *Pol.*, III, 1278; Herod., II, 167.

²Hom., *Odys.*, xvii, 382-5.

relegated to slaves. And soon the artisan and the tradesman not only were thought to be inferior citizens, but, judged by the standards of ancient life, were actually inferior members of the state. It needed but a little more to say that trades were unfit for good citizens. Yet tradesmen performed a useful function; they were a necessary supplement to the citizen body. Every citizen stood in constant need of their services, and for this reason, and not because they were highly esteemed, artisans to repair and fashion arms for citizen-warriors were placed high in the Servian classification.¹

The industrial productions of those early times must have been of a very rude character. Yet the early Albans imitated Etruscan pottery in their rough cups and flasks,² and the blocks of stone at Antemnae are cut into sizes which approach regularity.³ And as Rome's position on the Tiber forced her to become the emporium of Latium and to develop urban rather than pastoral or agricultural characteristics, trades began to thrive, and Mamurius Veturius, the skilled maker of shields, to receive celebration in the hymns of the Salii.⁴

The independent economy of the *fundus* broke down before the growing complexity of Roman life. The failure to realize their ideal led to the rise of those trades and industries which had grown up outside of the household. This change, as we have seen, the Romans attributed to Numa in the distribution made according to the several trades. This arrangement, however, must not be confused with the Servian military classification, in which carpenters and bronzesmiths had a place to prepare instruments of war.⁵ In the course of time the ranks of the workmen were constantly recruited by the influx of strangers, by the ruin of small farmers, and later still, by the emancipation of slaves. The low esteem in which the urban tribes came to be held receives an explanation in the consideration that workmen were enrolled in them.⁶

¹Arist., *Pol.*, 1337, b; III, 1278; Aristoph., *Hip.*, 738; Xen., *Oec.*, iv, 2; Seneca, *Ep. ad Lucil.*, 88.

²Lanciani, *Ancient Rome in the Light of Recent Excavations*, p. 31.

³Lanciani, *Ruins and Excavations of Ancient Rome*, p. 112.

⁴Pestus, s.v. *Mamuri*, p. 131; Ovid, *Fast.*, iii, 387; Plut., *Numa*, xiii.

⁵Livy, I, xliii, 3 et 7; Dion. of Hal., *R.A.*, IV, xvii.

⁶Livy, I, lvi, 1; Dion. of Hal., *R.A.*, IV, xxii; Pliny, *N.H.*, xviii, 13.

It is impossible to determine the exact character of the trades of this early period. But it is probable that, as in the case of Japan, skilled workmen associated in a union, which, becoming semi-religious in character, had regular meeting places, and by conference and assembly preserved the traditions and improved the technique of their arts.¹

While the developments described above were taking place in Rome, her trades were subjected to outside influences. For example, transmarine commerce, essential to the foundation and continued existence of the trade of the goldsmiths in Rome, by the introduction of products of a more highly developed skill, led Roman crafts to follow tendencies that were not native.

a. Bronze

Iron was not introduced into Rome until a comparatively late period. The excavations of 1867 on the site of ancient Alba, in the Pascolare di Castello, revealed inside or near the cinerary urns no iron but only amber and bronze. Nor was iron found in the archaic tombs of Rome discovered within the Servian Wall,—tombs that are consequently older than the walls themselves.² The list of Numa's tradesmen contains no workers in iron.³ Of the earliest Roman bridge across the Tiber, Pons Sublicius, iron originally formed no part, while in subsequent restorations its use was actually prohibited by religious tradition.⁴ That iron was not used till late, or at least was subsequent to bronze, we learn from Lucretius, whose acquaintance with Roman ritual adds weight to his statements.⁵ Religion indicates a time when people, though not yet beginning to work in iron, were already fashioning articles in bronze. Bronze is used in the garb of the Salii,⁶

¹Plut., *Num.*, xvii.

²Lanciani, *Ancient Rome in the Light of Recent Excavations*, pp. 31-9.

³Plut., *Numa*, xvii, 2.

⁴Plut., *Num.*, ix, 3; Pliny, *N.H.*, xxxvi, 23, 100; Dion. of Hal., *R.A.*, V, xxiv.

⁵*De Rer. Nat.*, v, 1286; compare Ovid, *Fast.*, iv, 405; Hesiod, *W. and D.*, 150.

⁶Livy, I, xx, 4.

and with a bronze plough were traced the limits of newly founded colonies.¹

The fact that braziers are found in Numa's list shows that the Romans considered bronze-working to be almost as ancient as the city itself,²—a belief confirmed by excavations made at Antemnae.³ At a very early date copper was found in southern Italy, and travellers from Greece "sailed over the dark sea to men of a different language, to Temesa for bronze,"⁴ and Etruscan works of bronze were exported to Greece.⁵ Moreover the monetary system of Rome was based on copper, first in bulk, "*aes rude*," and then in coin, "*aes grave signatum*". Timaeus, however, is probably wrong in assigning the first stamped coins to the regal period;⁶ and no real value can be attached to the statements of Latin writers that copper coins were used in the specific reigns of Romulus, Numa, and Servius.⁷ It is correct, nevertheless, to state that copper was used extensively in the regal and early Republican periods, and that the first stamped coin was bronze.

b. Pottery

In a more or less imperfect form, pottery existed at Rome from the earliest times.⁸ Recent excavations, however, have revealed at Antemnae⁹ pottery, one-third of local make, and baked in an open fire, the rest of Etruscan origin; at Rome, pottery, half of local origin, half of Etruscan; and at Alba

¹Plut., *Rom.*, xi, 2.

²Pliny, *N.H.*, xxxiv, 1.

³Lanciani, *The Ruins and Excavations of Ancient Rome*, p. 112.

⁴Hom., *Odys.*, i, 183; Strabo, *Geog.*, vi, 255. But perhaps the poet was thinking of Cyprus (*ῥάμματος*), *vid.* Perrin's note on *Il.*, I, 184; Beloch, *Gr.G.*, I, 201.

⁵Athen., I, p. 28 b.

⁶Pliny, *N.H.*, xxxiii, 43; xxxiv, 1; Gaius, *Instit. Iur. Civ. Com.*, I, 122; Festus, p. 98 s.v. *Grave Aes*. In 1852, when the Jesuit Fathers, owners of the "Sorgenti di Vicarello," were clearing the mouth of the central spring, Padre Marchi found a few hundred pieces of *aes grave signatum*, the earliest kind of Roman coinage. Under these there was a bed of *aes rude*, that is to say, of shapeless fragments of copper.—Lanciani, *A.R. in the L. of R.E.*, pp. 46-7.

⁷Plut., *Rom.*, xxiv., 3; Numa, xiii, 4; Pliny, *N.H.*, xviii, 12; Livy, I, xliii, 2.

⁸Tibullus, i, 40; Marquardt, *Privatleben der Römer*, ii, 637.

⁹Lanciani, *The R. and E. of A.R.*, p. 112.

Longa, many specimens of Etruscan pottery in tombs and on the floors of square huts.¹ The extreme antiquity of earthenware is attested by its use in religious ceremonies. For example, vessels, not of gold and silver, but of simple earthenware, were employed for libations;² an earthen jar contained the sacred fire of Vesta;³ after ages held in veneration the simple terra-cotta drinking-cup of Numa Pompilius;⁴ and, finally, the annals of the *Fratres Arvales* for the second day of the *sacrum deae Diae* included the expression, "Their prayers they've uttered to jars of earthenware."⁵ It was because the Roman writers were conscious of the extreme antiquity of pottery that they credited Numa Pompilius with the institution of a corporation of potters at Rome,⁶ and loved to linger over the story of how Curius the consul preferred his own earthenware to Samnite gold.⁷

The active importation of bronze and pottery plainly indicates that the state as a whole, whether or not it was conscious of an attempt to attain to an ideal of independent self-sufficiency, at any rate was not self-sufficient. At the same time, the existence and success of local manufacture shows how through centuries close family corporations can develop and perfect an art requiring considerable technical skill.

§ 5. BUSINESS AND COMMERCE

Business was foreign to the instincts of the noble Roman; commerce, inconsistent with his "*gravitas*" and ideal of independence.⁸ In preserving, however, the independent economy of his *fundus*, the Roman landowner transported the produce of his farm on his own ship. Then, too, Rome's position on the Tiber and near the Anio valley concentrated in her markets all the trade of Latium, and rendered it in-

¹Lanciani, *A.R. in the L. of R.E.*, p. 27 seq.

²Dion. of Hal., *R.A.*, II, xxiii; Pliny, *N.H.*, xxxv, 46, 158.

³Val. Max., *Mem.*, IV, iv, 11.

⁴Juv., *Sat.*, vi, 342.

⁵*Acta Fratrum Arvalium*, ed. Henzen, p. 26.

⁶Pliny, *N.H.*, xxxv, 46, 159.

⁷Florus, *Epit.*, i, 13.

⁸Val. Max., iii, 4, 2; Plaut., *Capt.*, 98.

evitable that the immense gains in this sphere of activity should not remain unknown and unattractive to the Romans. The profits of merchandise, therefore, ceased to be hateful and unbecoming. To engage in commerce was not the unseemly thing; it was discreditable to fail to do so on a large scale.¹

As a matter of fact, the Romans by no means lacked the qualities essential to commercial enterprise. Early in their history they had erected a temple to Good Faith.² When a Roman gave his word he was loyal to his promise.³ The rights of property were guaranteed with scrupulous care and every precaution taken to guard the interests of partners. No people ever guaranteed credit so ruthlessly as the Romans. Slavery for debt, common to Greeks and Romans, seems to have been worse in Rome and to have persisted longer. Even the body of the debtor could be divided to satisfy the creditors.⁴ Neither owner could sell his share in a partnership without consultation with his associate.⁵ Nor did the law leave much room for fraudulent operations. For instance, it was necessary in the sale of slaves to make a frank statement of their defects;⁶ and the most scrupulous care was taken to have all public weights accurate and equal.⁷ These safeguards are merely the crystallized expression of the primitive spirit of the Romans,—rigid honesty—a characteristic of prime importance to a mercantile community.

Whereas the independent economy of the *fundus* was a sacred aspiration, in reality it could satisfy no man's wants. But where religion with its ideals proved inadequate, religion with its great festivals and gatherings provided a means to supply the needs of the people. In Greece, because large numbers of people assembling from all districts made even

¹Cato, *R.R.*, *Praef.* 1 et 3; Cic., *De Off.*, i, 42.

²Livy, I, xxi, 4; Plut., *Numa*, xvi, 1.

³Polyb., vi, 56.

⁴Aul. Gell., *Noct. Att.*, xx, i, 48; Dion Cass., *Hist. Rom.*, ἐκ τῶν πρὸ τοῦ Ἀσ, 17, 8.

⁵Plaut., *Mercat.*, 443; Ulp. i, 18.

⁶Hor., *Ep.*, II, ii, 16-18; *De Aed. Edict.*, D. xxi, 1.

⁷Festus, 246 M, quoted in Bruns, *Fontes Iuris Romani Antiqui.*

distant parts of the country known for their needs and their resources, and traders found in the great concourse of people a ready market for their wares, the great national gatherings and games gave commerce a powerful impulse.¹ In Rome, likewise, the beginnings of commerce were associated intimately with religious gatherings. At the temple of Diana on the Aventine assembled the various Latin communities;² the shrine of Feronia served both Latins and Sabines as a common meeting-place not only for worship but also for the exchange of commodities;³ while the concourse of Latins, Hernicans, Romans, and Volscians at the Latin festival in honour of Jupiter Latiaris, tended to foster a brisk trade.⁴ Again, recent explorations of the Forum have revealed the national monument known as the Tomb of Romulus. This memorial, possibly the joint offering of all the various communities of Rome, was situated on neutral ground in the hollow space outside the boundaries of the Quirinal, Capitoline, Caelian and Palatine hills.⁵ The subsequent development of the Forum at this spot suggests that the Forum sprang from the religious and commercial relations of the different communities which united to form Rome.

Markets were instituted on every eighth day, that the country people might visit the city to dispose of their produce. That they might not be called away from their marketing, but rather that every facility might be given to transact business, it was made illegal to hold the Comitia upon these *Nundinae*.⁶ As the early establishments of shops greatly facilitated business, the Forum in time came to be surrounded with *tabernae*, one of which was the butcher's shop made immortal by the story of Virginia.⁷

¹Dion Chrys., *Orat.*, viii ; Plaut., *Cistell.*, 154.

²Dion. of Hal., *R.A.*, IV, xxvi.

³Livy, I, xxx, 4 ; Dion. of Hal., *R.A.*, III, xxxii.

⁴Dion. of Hal., *R.A.*, IV, xlix.

⁵Lanciani, *New Tales of Old Rome*, pp. 2-12.

⁶Pliny, *N.H.*, xviii, 13 ; Dion. of Hal., *R.A.*, II, xxviii ; Col., *R.R.*, I, *Praef.*, 18 ; compare L. Julius Cæsar, quoted in Macrob., i, 16, 29.

⁷Dion. of Hal., *R.A.*, III, lxvii ; Livy, III, xlviii.

Rome's commerce outside of Latium practically began with the foundation of Ostia.¹ Destined from her central position to become the mart of Latium² and later the emporium of Italy, Rome must have early felt the need of such an outpost both for harbourage and as a protecting fort. Nor is it likely that for the small boats of that remote age the immense deposits of silt borne down by the yellow Tiber impaired as in later times the efficacy either of Ostia as a roadstead or of the river as a highway to Rome.³

But besides its great water-route, from the earliest times Rome had more or less clearly defined land-routes. The *Via Salaria* extended from the Colline gate through Antemnae, Fidenae, and in a north-easterly direction along the left bank of the Tiber. Along it the primitive ox-cart creaked with its load of salt from Ostia for the shepherds of the uplands.⁴ From time immemorial venturous Italian traders had dared the dangers of the Alps to barter with barbarian tribes beyond, and perhaps revived their failing courage by recalling that by this route Hercules was said to have reached Italy from Gaul.⁵

That there was a great inter-Italian commerce is indicated by the fact that copper was a general medium of exchange throughout the whole peninsula.⁶ Conditions were very favourable for Rome to stretch out the tentacles of commerce towards the western Mediterranean. The great colonizing movement of the Greeks, more especially of the Phocaeans, tended to displace the Phoenicians who with trading-posts situated on the promontories and coasts of the western sea had long since established a brisk trade with the native peoples.⁷ But Greek colonization and commerce in their turn

¹Strab., *Geog.*, c. 231 ; Dion. of Hal., *R.A.*, III, xlv.

²Pliny, *N.H.*, iii, 53 ; Cic., *De Rep.* ii, 5, 10 ; Dion. of Hal., *R.A.*, II, liii ; II, lv : III, xlv ; Livy, V, liv, 4.

³Strab., *Geog.*, c. 231 ; Lanciani, *A.R. in L. of R. E.*, pp. 234-5.

⁴Strab., *Geog.*, c. 228 ; Livy, I, xxxiii, 8 ; Pliny, *N.H.*, xxxi, 41, 89 ; Dion. of Hal., *R.A.*, II, lv.

⁵Arist., *De mir. ausc.*, lxxxv.

⁶Mommsen, *History of Rome*, I, 252.

⁷Herod., i, 163.

were forced to yield; for on the north coast had arisen the people of the Etruscans whose commercial greatness was due not more to the rich copper, silver and iron of their country than to the daring of their sailors; while the Phoenicians attempted to strengthen their grasp by establishing in Libya the entrepôt of Carthage, a city with the same trading instincts as the metropolis but with a newer life. Co-operating on the basis of a common enmity to their common rival, the combined fleets of these two states overthrew in the naval engagement of Aleria (or Alalia) in 537 B.C. the commercial supremacy of the Greeks in the western Mediterranean.¹ It was during this struggle of the Etruscans and Carthaginians against the Greeks that the Romans embarked upon marine enterprise. Fortunately their relations with all the combatants were cordial; for they had intimate commercial connections with Carthage, with the Etruscans of Caere, and with the Phocæans of Velia and Massilia.²

This commercial development is largely due to the encouragement given to trade by the last kings of Rome. Now head of the Latin league, the Romans could safely go afield in their enterprises.³ The expansion of their trade is best indicated by their position in the great commercial treaty concluded with Carthage about the beginning of the Republic. Their wide-extended mercantile interests have made it necessary clearly to define their relations to Carthage in the commerce of the western Mediterranean. While the Carthaginians engage themselves not to injure any people under Roman jurisdiction, and Carthage, parts of Africa, Sardinia, and the Carthaginian possessions in Sicily are open to the Roman merchant, neither the Romans nor their allies shall sail beyond the *Pulcrum Promontorium*, the Fair Promontory in Africa, except under stress of weather, or unless compelled by an enemy. Even then they shall be allowed to take or

¹Herod., i, 166, 167.

²Mommsen, *History of Rome*, I, x. That mercantile relations obtained between Latium and the Sicilian Greeks such philological similarities as "*mutuum*" (loan), and *μῶτρον*, seem to show.

³Livy, I, lii, 4.

purchase only what is barely necessary for refitting their vessels, or for sacrifices; and they shall depart within five days. Those merchants, moreover, who offer goods for sale in Sardinia or in Africa shall be required to pay no customs beyond the usual fee to the scribe and crier; and the state shall guarantee payment for all sales in the presence of the officials.¹

Nor were the early trading efforts of the Italians, if not of the Romans, confined to the west. We have already seen that Italian bronze and pottery of a remote period were found in Greece. A connection with Egypt is attested by the Egyptian style, material, and hieroglyphics of vessels unearthed from the sepulchral chambers of Italy.² The Etruscans, their nearest neighbours in the immediate north, also exerted a stimulating influence upon Roman business. Their preeminence in navigation and commerce has been already noticed. At a time when the Romans had not yet developed their manufactures Rome derived her curule chair and *toga praetexta* from Etruria.³ The Roman commerce lacked the aggressiveness of the Etruscan. Its origin and existence were not to the same degree the outcome of deliberate policy, but the result of failure on the part of the *fundus* to maintain an independent economy. The produce of the *fundus* was handled by those within its pale; the wholesale commerce of Latium was thrown into the hands of landed proprietors. Accustomed as they were to ship on the Tiber the produce of their own farms, it was only the larger landholders that possessed either articles to send abroad or means of transportation when transmarine traffic sprang up.⁴ Many of the plebeians possessed no farms but attended to small retail interests or plied a trade not sanctioned by the religion of the household and regarded with contempt.⁵ At the close of the regal period, Rome was a well advanced agricultural and mercantile state, with the agricultural interests, however, greatly predominating. The

¹Polybius, III, xxii, xxiii.

²Mommsen, *History of Rome*, I, 253.

³Livy, I, viii, 3.

⁴An interesting parallel is seen in Hesiod, *W. and D.*, 689.

⁵Compare the Greek,—Xen., *Mem.*, III, vii, 6 ; Plato, *Pol.*, 260, D.; Homer, *Odys.*, viii, 161 seq.

incessant wars and struggles of the first two centuries and a half of the Republic consolidated Rome and secured her supremacy in Italy, but precluded any considerable progress in agriculture and commerce.

§ 6. THE REVOLUTION

Not altogether political, but to some extent economic, was the revolution by which the kings were expelled from Rome. From the Roman writers we learn the utter distress of the people compelled to construct great public works.¹ The last kings, it is well known, engaged in great building operations. Local tufa, peperine of Alba and of Gabii, the travertine of Tibur and the quarry-stone of Fidenae and Mt. Soracte offered material invitingly near.² And it is the kings who are responsible for the employment of this material in those monumental structures,—the Palatine walls,³ the temple of Jupiter Stator,⁴ the Pons Sublicius,⁵ the harbour at Ostia,⁶ the “Carcer imminens foro,”⁷ the temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus,⁸ the Cloaca Maxima,⁹ and the walls of Tarquinius Priscus,¹⁰ Servius Tullius,¹¹ and Tarquinius Superbus.¹² Excavations at Antemnae reveal walls built of blocks of local stone, each 2 feet by 3 feet.¹³ The oldest remains are in Etruscan style—*opus quadratum*—with blocks of tufa lengthwise in one tier, crosswise in the next.¹⁴ Thus

¹Livy, I, xxxviii, 5; iv, 6; lvi, 1; lvi, 3; lvii, 1; lix, 9; Dion. of Hal., R.A., IV, xliv et lxxxi.

²Marquardt, *Privatleben der Römer*, p. 599; Lanciani, *The R. and E. of A. R.*, p. 32; Strabo, *Geog.*, v, c. 238; Pliny, *N.H.*, xxxvi, 46; Vitruv., *De Architect.*, ii, 7, 1.

³Lanciani, *R. and E. of A.R.*, pp. 59, 60, 127; Livy, I, vii, 3.

⁴Dion. of Hal., R.A., II, 1; Livy, I, xii, 6.

⁵Dion. of Hal., R.A., III, xlv; Livy, I, xxxiii, 6.

⁶See above p. 24.

⁷Livy, I, xxxiii, 8.

⁸Livy, I, lv, 1.

⁹Dion. of Hal., R.A., III, lxvii; Livy, I, lvi, 2.

¹⁰Dion. of Hal., R.A., III, lxvii.

¹¹Livy, I, xlii, 3.

¹²Pliny, *N.H.*, iii, 67.

¹³Lanciani, *R. and E. of A.R.*, p. 112.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, p. 43.

the tomb of Horatia is built of *saxum quadratum*.¹ Etruscan engineers and workmen were the chief architects and builders of early Rome.²

The building of the Servian Wall, however, marks an epoch in Roman development; its splendid material forms a striking contrast to the more primitive works.³ But greater activity in public construction meant an increased oppression for the Romans. The very name of the city walls (*moenia*, i.e. *munia*, tasks) indicates that their creation was a burden to the citizens. Their distress was aggravated by financial uneasiness, attributed by Roman writers to the abolition of the "Servian law of contracts";⁴ and the miseries of famine were intensified by excessive port-dues.⁵ To this accumulation of unusual social burdens were added the everyday trials of the people,—the oppression of all classes, the jealousy of the patricians and their injustice towards the plebeians. It must have been an extreme of building activity, which was task work, that led the plebeians to unite with the patricians against their natural protectors, the kings. Perhaps it was really a foible for great building in the last Etruscan overlords of Rome (the last three kings would appear to mean a temporary conquest of Latium by Etruria,) that led to the revolution and their expulsion. Some individual instance of wrongdoing, like the rape of Lucretia, may have been the occasion but was certainly not the cause that dissatisfaction broke forth into violence. The rotation of the kingship among the patricians by the establishment of a yearly consulship and the "restoration of the law of contracts" proved an efficient revolutionary compromise.⁶

¹Livy, I, xxvi, 14.

²Livy, I, lvi, 1.

³Lanciani, *R. and E. of A. R.*, p. 128.

⁴Dion. of Hal., *R.A.*, IV, xlii et xliii.

⁵This became acute shortly after the expulsion of Tarquin.—Livy, II, ix.

⁶Dion. of Hal., *R.A.*, IV, lxxxiv ; V, ii.

BOOK II

THE PERIOD OF STRUGGLE

During the first two centuries and a half of the Republic, the history of Rome is the history of an incessant struggle. After a bitter strife the two sections of her population at last assume definite relations to each other, and then become assimilated into a more homogeneous whole. In her external relations Rome becomes mistress of the peninsula.

The regal period had seen an intimate alliance between the kings and plebeians. The former rewarded the latter for their support against their rivals, the patricians, by their creation of a class of landed plebeians. The common people became proprietors. The Servian legislation presupposes this.¹ It graded military service according to wealth, and wealth was land. The Revolution was the opportunity of the patricians. Taking advantage of discontent among the commons, arising from overpressure of the task work of great building, to disturb the hitherto amicable relations between king and plebeians, their patrician indignation found successful vent in a patrician victory. At once they began to reap the fruits of their triumph. Assignations of land to the plebeian members of the community ceased. For now the patrician senate, and not a king with plebeian sympathies, dispensed the patronage. The "occupation" system comes into vogue. This policy would strike at the poor, whether patrician or plebeian. It would not greatly offend the richer plebeians whose large properties served as a capital sufficiently great to secure the advantages to be derived from occupation. A new nobility is already in process of formation. It becomes legally completed and fully crystallized when the Licinian laws based it on wealth and family honours. In this manner arose moderately large estates,—a condition which was fostered by Rome's growing importance as a mercantile city. From the earliest times, moreover, there were strong motives oper-

¹Livy, I, xlii, 5; xliii, 1; xliii, 10; Dion. of Hal., *R.A.*, IV, xvi; IV, xx.

ating to drive the farmer from the flats of the Tiber. The more healthful atmosphere of the city hills induced the proprietor to linger in the campagna only so long as the management of his farm demanded. In time he ceased more and more to engage personally in agriculture and devoted himself to commercial interests associated with the produce of his farm. As his capital increased partly through commerce, partly through state contracts, his estates widened.

Gradually there grew up within the state a line of cleavage between those on the one hand who, having early possessed land, had by their enterprise greatly extended their property, or who, though not originally proprietors of estates, had by good fortune or industry gained for themselves large holdings, and those on the other who, whether in the first place proprietors or not, had never seen their holdings expand beyond the smallest dimensions.¹

¹Reasons will be given later for the belief that the size of the holding of a small proprietor was about 14 or 15 jugera. The 2 jugera assigned to the 1,500 colonists sent to Labici (Livy, IV, xlvii, 7) and the 2½ jugera of the 2,000 colonists of Satricum (Livy, IV, xvi, 6), were little more than house-plots. It seems, however, that Veii, where land was distributed at the rate of 7 jugera to each colonist, and where the children were considered in the allotment (Livy, V, xxx, 8), was an exception which was soon to become the rule. An increase in the size of the allotments is shown in the following table :

COLONY.	REFERENCE IN LIVY.	NUMBER SENT.	ALLOTMENT OF JUGERA.	DATE B.C.
Labici.....	iv, 47.....	1500.....	2.....	415
In Volscos.....	v, 24.....	3000.....	3½.....	392
In Veios.....	v, 30.....	<i>Et liberi</i>	7.....	390
Satricum.....	vi, 16.....	2000.....	2½.....	382
Anxur.....	viii, 21.....	300.....	2.....	326
Vibo.....	xxxv, 40.....	{ pedites, 3700..... equites, 300.....	5..... 10.....	192
Bononia.....	xxxvii, 57.....	{ ceteri equites, } 3000.....	50..... 70.....	189
Pisaurum.....	xxxix, 44.....	(?).....	6.....	184
Potentia.....	xxxix, 44.....	(?).....	6.....	184
Mutina.....	xxxix, 55.....	2000.....	5.....	183
Parma.....	xxxix, 55.....	2000.....	8.....	183
Saturnia in agrum Cale- tranum.....	xxxix, 55.....	(?).....	10.....	183
Gravici.....	xl, 29.....	(?).....	5.....	181
Aquileia.....	xl, 34.....	3000 { pedites centuriones equites	50..... 100..... 140.....	181

This increase in the size of allotments indicates that no longer were house-plots granted with the privilege of occupying the land which, in the case of colonies, must have been abundant. The state may even have expected the holders of small lots to be tenants or day labourers on the estates of the rich. As the land in Italy was appropriated it became more and more necessary

A clash of interests between these classes, the large land-owners and the small proprietors, was inevitable. That Rome was not spared this strife, and that, too, at a period when she was contending for her very existence, will account for the slight development at this period of Rome's commercial enterprise.

We are not to suppose that all patricians were rich and all plebeians poor. Though the tribunes might insist that it was the patricians who were engrossing the land,¹ and an agrarian law was thought to imply the expulsion of the patricians from the *ager publicus*,² yet it is only with a liberal interpretation that we can say that the patricians represented the large landed proprietors. The large proprietors, indeed, were the wealthy members of both orders, plebeian and patrician. "Nay", says Valerius, "this has been made a reproach against me, that I sent a colony to the Volscians, that I apportioned extensive areas of fertile lands, not to the patricians and the equites, but to the needy ones among your order. This, especially, aroused their greatest wrath against me, that in the levy I added to the equites more than 400 wealthy plebeians."³ Ancient writers, indeed, have confused the senate, the patricians and the large proprietors. The truth is that we cannot treat these classes as identical, although the three terms practically denote the same persons.⁴ The

for each colonist to receive an allotment sufficient for his support. It is impossible, also, to estimate exactly the area of the larger holdings. Doubtless they varied considerably. Nevertheless, the object of the Licinian laws of 367 B.C. was to limit to 500 jugera the extent of the public land occupied by the rich (Appian, *De Bell. Civil.*, i, 8; Livy, VI, xxxv, 5). It must be remembered that this was entirely apart from their private estates. And yet, the language in which the demands on the wealthy patricians were expressed seems unduly exaggerated:—"Were they so shameless as to require that, when the allotment to a plebeian did not exceed 2 jugera of land, they should be allowed to possess more than 500 jugera each; that single individuals should be permitted to hold the share of almost 300 citizens, while a plebeian had barely the extent of land sufficient for a meagre habitation, or a place of burial?" (Livy, VI, xxxvi, 11). It may be near the truth to state that the land occupied by the large proprietors was from 30 to 50 times as great as the holding of the small landowner. In any case the acreage of the former was so large that had it not been for the immediate conquest of Italy the state must have experienced revolution.

¹Livy, VI, xxxvii, 2.

²Livy, IV, li, 5.

³Dion. of Hal., R.A., VI, xxvii et xlv.

⁴Dion. of Hal., R.A., VII, lxiv; IX, xxvii.

senators had estates in the country, for they had to be summoned thence when the decemvirs wished to convene the senate.¹ Lucius Quinctius Cincinnatus, with his four jugera across the Tiber, was a patrician who was not a large proprietor,² while poverty compelled his worthy lieutenant, Lucius Tarquinius, to serve in the infantry.³ There were poor patricians as well as poor plebeians. It is clear then that the large estates were not held exclusively by patricians, nor the small farms exclusively by plebeians. Most of the great proprietors, however, were patrician, and the class of small landowners was predominantly plebeian.⁴

Since in this period Rome was fighting for her existence, her wars proved a heavy burden to the small landholder. The picture Livy has given of one unfortunate defender of his country from the Sabine inroads represents a condition which could scarcely have been uncommon. The whole produce of his farm was lost, his house burnt, his goods plundered, his cattle driven off, and he himself was compelled to incur debt. His debt increased until, deprived of the farm which he had inherited from his father and grandfather, and stripped of all his possessions, he was being dragged off by the creditor, "not into servitude merely, but to the *ergastulum*, a veritable place of torture."⁵

The small landowner was in a position of extreme difficulty. The strict enforcement of the laws of debt occasioned acute distress and the petty farmers refused to enlist. At times only the suspension of these laws could make it possible for Rome to resist invasion; it needed but their revival to induce the farmers to secede.⁶ Though it is necessary, doubtless, to discount the statement of Titus Larcus that the whole plebeian body was plunged into debt, yet we can readily comprehend why the suspension of payments exerted upon the

¹Livy, III, xxxviii, 11 et 12.

²Livy, III, xxvi, 8.

³Livy, III, xxvii.

⁴Dion. of Hal., R.A., VII, i.

⁵Livy, II, xxiii, 5.

⁶Livy, II, xxiii, 2; xxiii, 6; xxvii, 1; Sallust, *Hist.*, i, 9; Cic., *De Rep.*, ii, 33, 58; Florus, I, xxiii; Dion of Hal., R.A., V, liii, lxiii, lxix; VI, xxii; Plut., *Cor.*, v.

state an influence so quieting.¹ We little wonder that the dream of the poorer classes was to abolish usury, and that this crisis produced a Manlius. If we can believe the tale which tradition has delighted to weave about this distinguished Roman, he was able to produce no less than four hundred fellow-countrymen who were grateful to him because he had lent them money without interest or prevented their goods from being sold or redeemed their persons from the custody of their creditors.²

The chief resource of the poor was to refuse to enlist. If there was no levy for them to obstruct, the plebeian tribune often came to their assistance and refused to allow debtors to be carried to prison.³ Their position was a very unhappy one. Debt overwhelmed the common people and, as their tribunes truthfully asserted, exposed them to one danger after another.⁴

Throughout the contest remedies were constantly applied to alleviate the sufferings of the poor. The tribunate⁵ and the right of appeal⁶ became effective weapons against the large proprietors. Countless agrarian laws were introduced, and the credit is due to Spurius Cassius that he was the first to see that the solution of Rome's economic problem lay in the distribution of the public land which the rich occupied.⁷ A less drastic method of dealing with the land question was furnished by colonization. Colonies served two ends. They protected Roman interests abroad, and removed the trouble-

¹Livy, II, xxix, 8 ; Dion. of Hal., *R.A.*, VI, i.

²Livy, VI, xviii, 2 ; xviii, 14 ; xx, 6.

³Livy, VI, xxvii, 9 ; xxxi, 5 ; xxxii, 1.

⁴Livy, VI, xxvii, 6.

⁵Livy, II, xxxiii, 1 ; Sallust, *Hist.*, i, 9 ; Dion. of Hal., *R.A.*, VI, lxxxix et xc ; Plut., *Coriol.*, vii, 1 ; Cic., *De Rep.*, ii, 34, 59.

⁶Livy, II, viii, 2 ; Dion. of Hal., *R.A.*, V, lxx.

⁷Livy, II, xli, 1 ; Dion. of Hal., *R.A.*, VIII, lxix:—Many of the agrarian laws are undoubtedly the invention of annalists. Agrarian legislation, however, was constantly being urged by tribunes (Livy, II, liv, 2). Their persistence shows that the issue was vital. To consider them mere party cries will not explain the enthusiasm of the tribunes, nor the stubborn opposition of the rich (Livy, IV, xlvii, 8). In 388 B.C., it proved difficult to interest the commons in an agrarian law to distribute the Pomptine region (Livy, VI, v, 1) ; but, when vigorously supported by plebeian tribunes, laws referring to lands near Rome never failed to arouse the distressed class (Livy, VI, xi, 8).

some element from the city.¹ The poor, however, preferred agrarian laws with land at home to colonies which drew them away from their ancient abode. So few gave in their names for the colony to be led to Antium that to fill up the number Volscians were enrolled.² On the other hand, agrarian legislation was unpopular with the senate which seized every opportunity to forestall agrarian measures by new colonizing schemes.³ The numerous colonies of the period, including Antium, Labici, Bolae, the colony among the Volscians, Veii, Satricum, and Nepete brought to the city considerable relief from economic distress. A further amelioration in the condition of the small landowners, to whom the constant wars proved ruinous, resulted from the privilege granted them of sacking the towns they captured. The pay which they began to receive for their military service proved a still greater boon.⁴

Appius Claudius, however, saw the real solution of the difficulty. He urged the appointment of a commission of inquiry to be composed of the most highly reputed senators. Where land had been unjustly occupied and cultivated, they should conserve the interests of the state by dividing a fixed portion into definite holdings. These were to be sold to private individuals who were to contest the title of the present occupants. On the other hand, the commission should safeguard the interests of those who had occupied and, in many cases, improved and built upon the public lands, by allowing them a five years' occupation if they paid into the war fund a stipulated rental.⁵ The cries, now for the division of the public land, now for colonies, and again, for money for the troops to be raised by taxing the possessors of estates, reflected well the necessities of the poor.⁶ So long, however, as the patricians, under the veil of their sacred character, guarded from the knowledge of the plebeians the modes of legal procedure, it was of small advantage to have special officers to protect

¹Dion. of Hal., *R.A.*, VI, xliii.

²Livy, III, i, 4 ; Dion. of Hal., *R.A.*, IX, lix.

³Livy, IV, xlvii, 6.

⁴Livy, IV, lix, 10.

⁵Dion. of Hal., *R.A.*, VIII, lxxiii.

⁶Livy, IV, xxxvi, 1.

the oppressed. The patricians could always keep in reserve some law forgotten or fabricated. Accordingly, in 462 B.C. C. Terentilius Arsa began the struggle for a code which resulted in the promulgation of the Twelve Tables.¹ As a result the laws became definite and were no longer subject to the arbitrary interpretation of patrician land-owners. The petty holder might still be injured but now he could easily find means of redress. These Tables reflect in a striking manner the economic character of the struggle. The great debt struggles leave their traces in the provisions that usurers, who exacted a higher rate of interest than ten per cent. per annum, should be liable to four-fold damages;² while, in default of settlement of a claim, the creditor could put the debtor for a period of sixty days into stocks or into chains weighing not more than fifteen pounds. Within this interval the debtor was to be brought before the praetor in the comitium on three successive market days, and the amount of the debt publicly declared. After the third market day the debtor might be punished with death or sold beyond the Tiber, the creditors might divide his body, and if any should take more than his just share, he should be held guiltless.³ Slaves were an element in the state, for there were measures which regulated their enfranchisement⁴ which fixed at 150 asses the penalty for fracturing their bones,⁵ and which prohibited their embalming.⁶ Two years' possession in the case of land and one year's in the case of other things created ownership.⁷ It is interesting to note that the law discriminated against aliens.⁸ A space of five feet was to be left between adjoining fields for the purposes of access and the turning of the plough.⁹ Stringent measures were adopted to punish the person who by enchantment blighted the crops of another, or attracted them from

¹Livy, III, ix, 5.

²*Tabula*, viii, 18 ; Tac., *Ann.*, vi, 16 ; Cato, *R.R.*, *Praef.*

³*Tabula*, iii ; Aul. Gell., 20, 1, 46-7.

⁴*Tabula*, v, 8.

⁵*Tabula*, viii, 3.

⁶*Tabula*, x, 6 ; Cic., *De Leg.*, ii, 24.

⁷*Tabula*, vi, 3 ; Cic., *Top.*, iv, 23.

⁸*Tabula*, iii, 7.

⁹*Tabula*, vii, 4 ; Cic., *De Leg.*, 1, 21.

one field to another,¹ or furtively cut or depastured a neighbour's growing crop.² It is instructive to observe that with the exception of the privilege of partnership,³ which eventually came to be possessed by individual groups, there are no provisions of an industrial or commercial character. The setting of the legislation of the Twelve Tables is agricultural. Commerce had been crippled by the wars of the period, and these laws are the regulations of an agricultural society.

The adoption of the Twelve Tables does not mark the end of Rome's internal struggle. Henceforth, however, the issue is to a great extent a new one, and strife is waged between other factions. The contest is now taken up by the wealthy plebeians, the rich land-owners among the rural population, who seek equal privileges with the patricians.⁴ In the struggle for the right of inter-marriage Canuleius strikes the keynote of the second half of the strife. He says, "In this question of inter-marriage with you, we ask for nothing beyond recognition as men and citizens."⁵ The line of cleavage is now between the privileged and the non-privileged, no longer between the rich and the poor.⁶

Very soon the poor plebeians began to look with suspicion upon the wealthy members of their order. The persistent effort of the tribunes to introduce agrarian laws had met with but ill-success. Tribunician agitators might insist that the interests of both sections of the plebeians were identical, that there could come no relief from the heavy burden of debt until plebeians shared in the administration;⁷ yet no union of the poor and wealthy was effected. Though a non-patrician could be elected military tribune with consular power, still for forty-five years no plebeian, the tribune bitterly complained, obtained that office.⁸

¹*Tabula*, viii, 8.

²*Tabula*, viii, 9; Pliny, *N.H.*, xviii, 3, 12.

³*Tabula*, viii, 27; Gaius, *lib. 4 ad leg. xii. tab. D.*, 47, 22, 4.

⁴Dion. of Hal., *R.A.*, VI, liii.

⁵Livy, VI, iv, 12; v, 5; lvi, 11.

⁶Livy, IV, iv, 9; Dion. of Hal., *R.A.*, X, xxix et xxxv.

⁷Livy, VI, xxxv, 1.

⁸Livy, IV, xxv, 1; IV, xxxv, 5; VI, xxxvii, 5; Dion. of Hal., *R.A.*, XI, lxi.

It became clearer that a compromise was necessary. Sextius, Licinius and Fabius declared that the patricians would cease to enlarge their estates and to crush the common people with interest only when the plebeians from their own order had elected a consul to be the guardian of their liberties. Admission to the administration was the indispensable condition for the proper exercise of their legitimate function as citizens.¹ On the other hand, the great mass of the plebeians, the poorer section, were interested not so much in political advancement as in the relief of the economic distress. They had slight sympathy for the aspirations of the wealthy members of their own order, who had manifested scant enthusiasm in seeking a remedy for economic evils in which they had a selfish interest. They may have felt that if, to achieve their ends, the rich plebeians for the moment lent themselves to measures of reform, there was no guarantee that aggression and encroachment might not follow hard upon the elevation of their wealthy fellow-plebeians. Therefore they were opposed to the election of a plebeian consul. Only the unflinching determination of the tribunes that the measure before the assembly should be accepted or rejected in its entirety saved the situation.² The Licinian Bills became law. That these laws sprang from mutual concessions, that the wealthy section of the plebeians aimed only to satisfy their political ambition and were either half-hearted in the support of these economic measures or opposed to them, is conclusively proved by one fact. The very man who had given his name to these regulations and by his efforts had made them law, Caius Licinius Stolo, was himself within ten years prosecuted for transgressing the limit fixed for the holdings of public lands.³

The ambitions of the wealthy proprietors were insured by the provisions :—

(a) that consuls, and not military tribunes with consular power, should be elected;

¹Livy, VI, xxxvii, 2 et 4.

²Livy, VI, xxxix, 1.

³Livy, VII, xvi, 9; Dion. of Hal., R.A., XIV, xii; Plut., *Camil.*, xxxix, 6; Pliny, *N.H.*, xviii, 17; Val. Max., VIII, vi, 3.

(b) that one consul should be plebeian;

(c) that the priestly college should consist of ten, instead of two, members; of these, five should be plebeians.

The small land-owners, the poor plebeians, were won by the following regulations :—

(a) that no single citizen should hold in occupation more than five hundred jugera of public land, nor pasture upon it more than one hundred cattle and five hundred sheep;

(b) that all landholders should employ some free, as well as slave, labour on their estates;

(c) that interest already paid on debts should be regarded as payment on the principal, and that the residue should be paid in three equal annual instalments.¹

The Licinian Bills evidently appeared at the moment to solve the difficulties. The long century and a half of incessant fighting was at last over. There was union in the little state, a union which manifested itself in a united action against the enemies of Rome, and resulted in making Rome mistress of the peninsula in less than a century. This yielded to Rome a vast territory more than ample to satisfy the needs of her people. It was this extended conquest that disguised from men the inherent nullity of the Licinian legislation on its economic side. For the Licinian legislation was defective. It could not eradicate the system of *latifundia*, nor abolish the employment of slaves. The former evil was, for the time, only more firmly entrenched; the expansion of Roman dominions, however, was soon to postpone it to the days of the Gracchi. The maximum quantity of five hundred jugera was so great, and such large flocks and herds could be pastured, that these measures failed to restrict, to any considerable degree, the privileges which the wealthy already enjoyed. If the landholder suffered any limitations he received an ample compensation in the quasi-legal sanction which the legislation conferred upon the system of occupation.

The legal measures of the century which followed reflect economic distress, but of a less aggravated character. To

¹Livy, VI, xxxv, 4 ; xxxvii, 12 ; xlii, 9 ; Varro, *R.R.*, I, ii, 9 ; Appian, *De Bell. Civ.*, I, 8 ; Val. Max., VIII, vi, 3 ; Pliny, *N.H.*, xviii, 17.

check the tendency to emancipate slaves, a tax of five per cent. was imposed in 357 B.C. on manumissions.¹ A vigorous contest succeeded in reducing the rate of interest to ten per cent. in 357 B.C.,² to five in 347 B.C.,³ and in abolishing it completely in 342 B.C.⁴ In 352 B.C. a state commission of five bankers was appointed to adjust the strained relations between debtors and creditors, and their efforts seem to have met with some success.⁵ The great gain for the poor, however, was the Poetilian law of 313 B.C., which forbade the seizure of the debtor's person, and abolished enslavement for debt.⁶ The heavy burden of debt in 287 B.C. produced a dangerous insurrection and a secession to the Janiculum.⁷ It is probable that mere legislation failed to give effectual relief. But relief did come. The century of conquest and Italian expansion meant the widening of Rome's dominions and thereby the solution of her economic difficulties. The armies necessary to subdue one people after another entailed a constant drain on her resources, but more and more they were supported by the peoples she subjugated.⁸ The first stage in her expansion is marked by the Samnite struggle of 343 B.C.⁹ It was her final defeat of Samnium, too, by 269 B.C., and the foundation of the Samnite colonies which established her sovereignty in the southern portion of the peninsula.¹⁰ The fruits of conquest were secured by the founding of colonies, which opened up for the poorer agricultural class opportunities to secure holdings, which removed the discontented section of Rome's population, and produced a prosperity that

¹Livy, VII, xvi, 7.

²Livy, VII, xvi, 1.

³Livy, VII, xix, 5 ; xxi, 3 ; xxvii, 3.

⁴Livy, VII, xlii, 1.

⁵Livy, VII, xxi, 5.

⁶Livy, VIII, xxviii, 1 et 8.

⁷*Joan. Freinshemii supp.* Liv. xi, 26.

⁸Livy, IX, xli, 7 ; xliii, 20 ; X, v, 12 ; xxxvii, 4 ; xli, 12.

⁹Livy, VII, xxix, 1.

¹⁰*Joan. Freinshemii supp.* Liv. xi, 26.

the growing consciousness of power greatly increased,¹ and the construction of great military roads² by their impetus to traffic and commerce helped to foster.

¹In this period we have among other indications of Rome's expansion,

(a) The addition of tribes (Livy, VII, xv, 12 ; VIII, xvii, 11).

(b) The sending out of colonies (Livy, VIII, xi, 13 ; xvi, 13 ; **xxi**, 11 ; **xxii**, 2 ; IX, xxviii, 7 ; X, i, 1 ; **x**, 5 ; **xxi**, 7 ; XI ; XV ; XVI.

²Livy, IX, xxix, 5 ; Diod. Sicul., xx. 36.

BOOK III

FROM ROME'S FIRST MEDITERRANEAN
EXPANSION TO THE CLOSE OF THE REPUBLIC

§ 1. GENERAL ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

a. The Growth of Riches

The century which followed the Licinian legislation made Rome mistress of Italy. It needed but another century to make her virtual mistress of the Mediterranean. Pydna established the empire. The process was no less sudden than splendid. The promptings of commercial interests, of whose potency Rome herself was only half conscious, brought about the clash with Carthage. Her struggle with Hannibal and her entry upon Eastern politics were brilliant incidents in a career that demanded only thirteen short years from Zama to see the empire of Alexander in her power. Rome's inheritance of the old Mediterranean civilization was too sudden. It yielded a premature and tremendous growth in riches. While she was engaged in her struggle in the peninsula, a primitive simplicity still obtained; and a Curius could prefer his earthen vessels to Samnite gold with the same sincerity that the censor Fabricius condemned for luxurious living the consular Rufinus, the possessor of ten pounds of silver.¹ On the eve of the Mediterranean contest, then, Rome's wealth was only moderate.² But even within half a century a marked difference is observable. Hannibal saw orchards and vineyards planted for pleasure rather than for utility;³ while the plebeian tribune, Caius Oppius, desirous of stemming the growing luxury, enacted, in 215 B.C., that no woman should possess more than half an ounce of gold, or wear a garment of varied colours, or ride in a carriage drawn by horses, except on occasion of a public religious solemnity.⁴ The proposal

¹Jul. Flor. *Epit.*, I, xiii, 18.

²Polyb., *Bell. Pun.*, I, xiii, 12.

³Livy, XXII, xv, 2.

⁴Livy, XXXIV, 1, 1-5.

to repeal this law twenty years later created a scene unprecedented at Rome. For the matrons beset every street and lane in the city, canvassed the men on their way to the Forum, begged to share in the prosperity of the state, and implored the restoration of their ornaments of dress. The tribes voted unanimously for the repeal; while the recognition, that altered conditions rendered such a sumptuary law intolerable, induced the tribunes to withdraw their protest.¹

The comedies of Plautus, though largely Greek in inspiration, yet naturally must reflect the immediate surroundings of their author. In them wealth is seemingly the base of the social structure. Money insured a good social position; wedlock without a marriage-portion might be regarded as concubinage;² ward-masters doled out money to the poor;³ *lenones* and *scorta* increased "like flies in warm weather;"⁴ and Roman ladies paid an inordinate attention to dress and ornament.⁵

The shows of the period are not only a great innovation but also a striking index to the wealth that was flowing into Rome. In 187 B.C., Cn. Manlius, conqueror of the Galatians, celebrated a triumph on a scale of magnificence hitherto unequalled;⁶ and no less than sixty-three panthers, and forty bears and elephants were exhibited in the games of the curule aediles in 169 B.C.⁷

From the time of the Curii and the Fabricii to that of Cato is but a short period as men count years, yet what a change had come over the state! The two stages of national life are separated as by a gulf. Simplicity had given way to wealth. No longer are men of straitened circumstances magistrates of Rome but candidates court the favour of the people with servility and largesses.⁸ On every side there is extrava-

¹Livy, XXXIV, i, 6; XXXIV, viii.

²Plaut., *Trinum.*, 158-160; 690-693.

³Plaut., *Aulul.*, 107-8; 172-3.

⁴Plaut., *Truc.*, 66-7.

⁵Plaut., *Epid.*, Act. II, Sc. II, 45-50.

⁶Livy, XXXIX, vi, 7; Pliny, *N.H.*, xxxiv, 14.

⁷Livy, XLIV, xviii.

⁸Plut., *Arist. cum Cat. Comp.*, I, 4.

gance. Fish sell for more than an ox,¹ jars of Pontic salt-fish fetch more than three hundred drachmae, handsome slaves are valued higher than farms,² and mosaic pavements of Numidian marble adorn the villas of the rich.³ To root out such luxuries the censor taxed at ten times their values all apparel, carriages, female ornaments, furniture and utensils in excess of 1500 drachmae.⁴ But even Cato himself succumbed to the spirit of the age. To gain money became with him the first of duties; and to the man who had doubled his patrimony he ascribed the highest honour.⁵

We have not sufficient evidence to enable us to trace every stage in the development of wealth and luxury. Between Cato and Lucullus extravagances became more and more extreme. The vast fortune which he had amassed in war, Lucullus spent lavishly on fish-ponds, villas, walks, baths, paintings, statues and other works of art. His structures in the sea gained for him the nickname "Xerxes, clad in toga".⁶ A Roman praetor who wished to exhibit magnificent games applied to Lucullus for one hundred purple robes for the chorus. He might have two hundred if he pleased, was Lucullus' reply.⁷ "We will dine with you, Lucullus," said Cicero and Pompey, "on this condition, that you set before us only that which is already provided for yourself." Lucullus demurred; on another day he would have made adequate provision. They insisted. Lucullus thereupon directed his servants to prepare supper in the room Apollo. The magnificence of the entertainment amazed the guests. Their host informed them that each apartment had a definite name and a certain scale of expense. "Suppers in the room Apollo always cost fifty thousand drachmae."⁸

¹Plut., *Cat. Mai.*, viii, 2.

²Polyb., XXXI, xxiv, 1, 2.

³Festus, p. 242 b, ll. 17-22.

⁴Plut., *Cat. Mai.*, xviii, 2, 3.

⁵Plut., *Cat. Mai.*, xxi, 11.

⁶Plut., *Lucull.*, xxxix, 2; Pliny, *N.H.*, ix, 170; Vell. Pater., II, 33.

⁷Plut., *Lucull.*, xxxix, 6; Hor., *Ep.*, I, vi, 40-4.

⁸Plut., *Lucull.*, xli, 4-6.

The statement of Crassus, furthermore, that no man ought to be esteemed rich who could not with his own revenue maintain an army, while highly extravagant, both reveals a high standard for wealth in his time, and indicates that Crassus himself was enormously rich. And yet we have it on Pliny's authority that Crassus was not so wealthy as Sulla.¹ Large debts are possible only where there are great riches. Julius Caesar is credited with the statement that he needed 25,000,000 sesterces (about \$1,250,000) to be worth nothing at all.² Later, however, Caesar could lay out considerable sums of money in the construction of the Appian road; while, as aedile, he eclipsed the most ambitious of his predecessors with his theatres, processions, public entertainments, and exhibitions of three hundred and twenty pairs of gladiators.³ It was Gaul that enriched Caesar. Cicero declared that he was wealthy enough to support the army there.⁴ At any rate, his exceedingly large bribes to partisans indicate his enormous riches. Thus, while 1,500 talents (about \$1,750,000) were sufficient to induce Paulus to give over further opposition, the tribune C. Curio required a larger sum,—he was more deeply involved in debt, and Caesar had to purchase his debts along with his support.⁵

In the civil war, Domitius Ahenobarbus had sufficient possessions to enable him to promise to each soldier of thirty cohorts four jugera, and to the centurions a proportionate share.⁶ Cicero received about a million dollars in legacies. He says, however, that in this respect Antony was more fortunate than he.⁷

In the time of Varro, the spread of luxury was noticeable in the number and extent of fish-ponds.⁸ "Fish-ponds," says he, "are of two kinds, fresh and salt. The first belong

¹Pliny, *N.H.*, xxxiii, 134; Cic., *Parad. Stoic.*, VI, i, 45; Cic., *De Offic.*, I, 8, 25; Plut., *Crass.*, II, 8.

²Appian, *De Bell. Civ.*, II, viii; Plut., *J. Caes.*, v, 4; xi, 1.

³Plut., *J. Caes.*, v, 4.

⁴Cic., *De Prov. Consul.*, xi, 28.

⁵Appian, *De Bell. Civ.*, I, 26; Vell. Pater., II, 48.

⁶Caes., *De Bell. Civ.*, I, 17.

⁷Cic., *In Ant. orat. Phil.*, II, 16, 40.

⁸Varro, *R.R.*, III, iii, 10.

to the common people and prove profitable when sources near the villas provide water for the ponds. Marine ponds, however, are the appanage of the nobility, and Neptune furnishes both the water and the fish. They satisfy the eyes more than the stomach, and empty rather than fill their master's purse. They are expensive to construct, expensive to stock, expensive to maintain. Hirrius used to derive 12,000,000 sesterces from the buildings about his ponds and this whole sum he spent in food for his fish. I remember that on one occasion he weighed and lent 6,000 *muraenae* to Caesar, and owing to the immense number of fish in his villa, it was sold for 40,000,000 sesterces. Not a soul amongst us is content with one fish-pond. Not a soul but has several marine ponds joined together out of individual ones.—These luxurious Romans have fish-ponds divided into compartments, to keep the several kinds of fish separate.—And yet no cook would dare to touch them.''¹ In many cases, however, fish-ponds proved exceedingly profitable. Thus the fattening of sea-fish was ten times as productive in Varro's time as was the cultivation of land.² In spite of this the ponds of Hortensius did not support him; on the contrary he supported them. Of his sick fish he took not less care than of his slaves.³

Nothing will enable us better to appreciate the luxury of Varro's time, or more clearly to perceive how the profit on money invested in a villa which supplied objects of delicacy was twice as great as from the same amount placed in landed property, than to consider some details which he has left us.⁴ Peacocks, for instance, sold easily for five denarii apiece; young peacocks fetched fifty denarii; a flock of one hundred yielded a return of 40,000 sestertia;⁵ Lurco derived from his 60,000 sesterces a year.⁶ Says our author,—“The proprietor demands of the caretaker three peacocks a nest. These, when full-grown, he sells for fifty denarii—a price beyond that of

¹Varro, *R.R.*, III, xvii, 2-4 ; Pliny, *N.H.*, ix, 171.

²Varro, *R.R.*, III, ii, 17.

³Varro, *R.R.*, III, xvii, 6 *et* 8.

⁴Varro, *R.R.*, III, ii, 15 *et* 17.

⁵Varro, *R.R.*, III, vi, 6.

⁶Varro, *R.R.*, III, vi, 1.

any sheep."¹ Not less were the profits from pigeons; some possessed flocks worth 100,000 sesterces.² It was a common occurrence for a pair of beautiful healthy pigeons to fetch 200 sesterces; especially excellent ones went as high as 1,000; while the knight Axius refused to accept less than 400 denarii for one pair.³ The culture of flowers was likewise extensive. Violets and roses yielded good returns.⁴ And yet the rich were not satisfied with the fruits of their country estates. For their feasts they must have delicacies transported from Rome.⁵ The luxury of the last two centuries of the Republic can still be seen, though in an exaggerated degree, in the time of Columella; a pair of birds brought 4,000 sesterces.⁶ The ancient virile life of the Romans, he protests, has given way to luxury and extravagance.⁷

But of all the phenomena that indicate an increase of wealth at Rome, nothing shews more clearly the growth of riches than the great extension of villas. This tendency, operative already in the days of Cato, had evoked from the censor the recommendation to sow and plant in youth and to defer building until more advanced in years. "You may build," says he, "at thirty-six years of age."⁸ A rivalry in this direction actuated the Romans.⁹ Marius had a fine villa at Misenum. Although Cornelia purchased it for 75,000 drachmae, yet luxury advanced by such leaps and bounds within a few years that Lucullus had to pay for it no less than 500,200 drachmae.¹⁰ This Lucullus, according to Pliny, through his excessive building, incurred the chastisement of the censors: he needed "less to plough his land than to sweep his barns."¹¹ Varro, too, adverts to the luxurious building in his time,—

¹Varro, *R.R.*, III, vi, 3.

²Varro, *R.R.*, III, vii, 11.

³Varro, *R.R.*, III, vii, 10.

⁴Varro, *R.R.*, I, xvi, 3.

⁵Varro, *R.R.*, I, lix, 2.

⁶Col., *R.R.*, VIII, viii, 10.

⁷Col., *R.R.*, I, *Praef.*, 14.

⁸Cato, *R.R.*, III.

⁹Cic., *De Leg.*, III, 13, 30.

¹⁰Plut., *Marius*, xxxiv, 2.

¹¹Pliny, *N.H.*, xviii, 6.

"In former times some regard was paid to the requirements of the farm produce; now our sole barriers are desires which we do not govern."¹ To produce new and startling effects, large hills were levelled, and edifices constructed into the sea. Their villas and mansions "extended to the size of cities."²

The lavish expenditure on funerals and monuments is also significant. To check this was the purpose of the law which stipulated that for any amount spent in this way in excess of a specified sum, an equivalent must be paid over into the exchequer.³ Wealth had long been undermining patriotism. Cicero, for example, speaks of the fools who fancied that, though the Republic were lost, yet their fish-ponds would be safe.⁴

Though riches thus dominated Roman society during the last two centuries of the Republic it is, of course, impossible to determine the exact moment when wealth and luxury began to outweigh other interests in Rome. Many things point to the period between Rome's first conflict with Carthage and the final overthrow of that city. Varro, however, suggests that the development of luxury was comparatively recent. A vast park, several jugera in extent, enclosed with walls, and containing great numbers of boars, belonged to Axius. Such luxury, he hints, was entirely unknown a generation or two earlier. Varro, likewise, attributes to the extravagance of his own age the great extension of parks and ponds. It is questionable, however, whether we can assign the beginning of this development to the time of Varro. Undoubtedly extravagance was rampant at that period; but even before this wealth had long been flowing into the metropolis.⁵ M. Belot has placed his "economic revolution" at Rome in the middle of the third century before the Christian era.⁶ At that time the censors were obliged to multiply by ten the numbers expressing in *asses* the census of the different classes

¹Varro, *R.R.*, I, xiii, 6-7.

²Sallust, *Cat.*, 12 et 13; Horace, *Carm.*, II, xviii, 18-22; III, i, 33-37.

³Plut., *Sulla*, xxxv, 2; Cic., *Ep. ad Att.*, XII, xxxv, 2.

⁴Cic., *Ep. ad Att.*, I, xviii, 6.

⁵Varro, *R.R.*, III, iii, 8 et 10.

⁶*De la Révolution Économique et Monétaire.*

and sub-classes of Roman society. Pliny, indeed, states that during the first Punic war the Roman *as* was diminished in weight from one pound to a *sextans*—or two ounces.¹ Each new *as* of a *sextans*, therefore, was worth six times less than the old *as* of a pound. This accounts for the diminution of the value of the *as* from six to one. In exchange, however, the new *as* of a *sextans* represented only the tenth of an old *as* of a pound. There occurred, then, not one but two movements. The *as* was diminished in weight from six to one, and the power of money fell from ten to six. This depreciation in the relative value of money Belot attributes less to the mass of precious metals thrown into circulation than to the activity of the circulation. This economic and monetary revolution marks the initial stages of the growth of riches.

The origin of this foreign luxury is attributed by Livy to the Asiatic army of Cn. Manlius Vulso, conqueror of the Galatians in 187 B.C.² Polybius speaks of Pydna as the beginning of what he calls dissoluteness. "It arose," says he, "from the prevalent idea, that owing to the destruction of the Macedonian monarchy universal dominion was secured to them beyond dispute; and in the second place, from the immense difference both in public and private wealth and splendour, occasioned by the importation of the riches of Macedonia into Rome."³ Says Sallust, "When Carthage, the rival of Rome's dominions, had been utterly destroyed, and sea and land lay everywhere open to her sway, Fortune began to go mad, and to introduce universal innovation. At first the love of money, and then that of power, began to prevail, and these were the virtual sources of every evil."⁴ In another place the same author states, "But discord and avarice, and ambition, and other evils that usually spring from prosperity, were most increased after Carthage was destroyed."⁵ And again, "From this period the manners of our forefathers degenerated; not as before, gradually, but

¹Pliny, *N.H.*, xxxiii, 13, 44.

²Livy, XXXIX, vi, 7.

³Polyb., xxxii, 11.

⁴Sallust, *Cat.*, 10.

⁵Sallust, *Hist. Frag.*, 1.

with precipitation, like a torrent, and the youth became so depraved with luxury and avarice, that they might be thought with justice to have been powerless either to preserve their own property or to suffer other individuals to preserve theirs."¹ The statement is made by Velleius Paterculus, that the elder Scipio had opened for the Romans the way to power, the younger, to luxury. "For when their dread of Carthage was at an end, and their rival in empire was removed, the nation, deserting the cause of virtue, went over, not gradually, but headlong to a career of vice; the old rules of conduct were renounced, and new ones introduced; and the people turned themselves from activity to slumber, from arms to pleasure, from business to idleness."² The period between the first and third Punic wars is a period of rapid and profound economic change.

During the second Punic war Rome must be considered comparatively sound, and in the war with Antiochus, the conqueror, by his acceptance of nothing beyond a golden crown, declared to the world that Rome was still waging war for honour, and was not prompted by greed nor actuated by purposes of state. Rome would have been happier had she retained this pristine moral vigour. She owed her riches to no industrial successes. She came into this vast wealth with no creative effort on her part—no conscious aim at all. The days of patriarchal discipline were ended with too great suddenness. There was no preliminary intellectual undermining process as in Greece, this came along with the wealth—the fatal gift of the vanquished.

To account for this inordinate growth of riches is a great problem in Roman economics. Enormous masses of gold and silver undoubtedly accumulated from her conquests. Thus in 209 B.C. the capture of Tarentum yielded 3,080 pounds of gold and a vast quantity of silver;³ in 201 B.C., Scipio brought to the Roman treasury 123,000 pounds of silver, distributed money among the soldiers,⁴ and extorted from the

¹Sallust, *Hist. Frag.*, I.

²Vell. Pater., II, i.

³Livy, XXVII, xvi.

⁴Livy, XXX, xlv.

Carthaginians the promise to pay 10,000 talents in fifty years;¹ the war with Philip of Macedon added great wealth;² that with Antiochus, 15,000 talents;³ while Aemilius Paulus paid out of the Macedonian spoil into the public treasury 300 millions of sesterces, and from this period the Roman people ceased to pay tribute.⁴ The consequence was that seven years before the third Punic war, the Roman treasury contained 17,410 pounds of gold, 22,070 of silver, besides 6,315,400 sesterces in specie.⁵ This process of accumulation is carried further in the last century of the Republic. Caesar, for example, amassed enormous riches in Gaul,⁶ while Pompey by his conquests increased the revenues of Rome from 50 to 85 millions of drachmae, brought to the Roman treasury 20,000 talents in money, gold and silver vessels, and distributed such vast sums among the soldiers that even the smallest share amounted to 1,500 drachmae.⁷

But the gains through war of the treasury and individuals go but a little way toward explaining the source of this sudden wealth. For the full explanation we must study Rome's relation to her provinces. The settlement of Macedonia after the battle of Pydna seems to state the conscious acceptance by Rome of the conception of dominion for profit. For the doing away with *tributum* in Italy coincides with the imposition upon Macedonia of a tribute which, small though it was, was accompanied by a disarmament which received no justification in any undertaking on the part of Rome to defend her newly constituted province. The provinces were hers to exploit, not to govern.⁸ The private accumulations of generals and pro-consuls were not merely prodigious; they

¹Livy, XXX, xxxvii.

²Livy, XXXIII, xiii; XXXIII, xxx; XXXIV, lii.

³Livy, XXXVII, xxxviii, xlv et lix; Appian, *De Bell. Mith.*, xxxviii; Polyb., xxi, 14; xxii, 26.

⁴Pliny, *N.H.*, xxxiii, 55; Plut., *Aem. Paul.*, XXXVIII; Cic., *De Offic.*, II, 22, 76; Val. Max., IV, iii, 8.

⁵Pliny, *N.H.*, xxxiii, 55.

⁶Plut., *J. Caes.*, XXIX, 2, 3.

⁷Plut., *Pomp.*, XLV, 3.

⁸Cic., *In C. Verr.*, II, ii, 3, 7; Caes., *De Bell. Civ.*, III, 32.

should have been a matter of reproach.¹ Asia especially was a fruitful source of revenue.² The vast wealth did not by any means all go into the public chest;³ Philippus exclaims in 106 B.C. that there were not 2,000 citizens in the state who possessed anything.⁴ There is more than rhetoric in Cicero's complaint,—“All the money of all nations has come into the hands of a few men.”⁵ Not Rome herself, but some few Romans have been enriched with the wealth of the provincials. Cicero knows only three ways for a Roman honestly to enrich himself—commerce, professional labour, and state contracts.⁶ It is our purpose to examine to what extent each of these contributed to the growth of riches under the Roman system.

b. Extension of Large Estates

We have seen already that the Licinian legislation aimed at preventing any extension of the *latifundia* which had arisen early in the Republic.⁷ But during the last two centuries of the Republic large estates grew and multiplied with each addition to the wealth of the metropolis. And not the growth of capital alone, but the occupation of public lands, the eviction of small land-owners, speculation, the increase of slavery and the unstable tenure of land due to revolutionary movements, all alike contributed to the same result.⁸

The influx of riches into Rome soon produced a revolution in Roman agriculture. Those who could lay hold of capital enlarged their estates. Since the senators were prevented by the *lex Claudia* from engaging in mercantile pursuits, investments in landed property offered a remunerative outlet for their wealth. Moreover, newly acquired territory when neither sold nor given away was public land. Since

¹Cic., *In C. Verr.*, II, v, 48, 127.

²Cic., *Pro leg. Man.*, VI, 14.

³Cic., *Ep. ad Fam.*, XII, xxx, 4; *Ep. ad Brut.*, I, xviii, 5.

⁴Cic., *De Offic.*, II, 21, 73.

⁵Cic., *In C. Verr.*, II, v, 48, 126.

⁶Cic., *Paradoxa Stoic.*, VI, 2, 46; *De Off.*, I, 42, 150.

⁷Livy, XXXIV, iv, 9.

⁸Sallust, *Fragm.*, XI.

private persons could occupy it, the rich were prompted to seize upon sections immediately adjoining their own holdings. Gradually subtle legal distinctions as well as boundary lines faded. If the property upon which they had encroached was merely a "*possessio*" and the "*possessor*" held no title from the state, yet against other individuals their right was founded on the insuperable fact of possession.¹ Very naturally, small holders were readily displaced, more especially if absent on military service.² Sallust in one place arraigns the rich : "After the terror of the Carthaginians was removed³ whoever grew eminently wealthy and better able to encroach on others was styled an excellent citizen if he supported the present state of affairs;"³ and in another complains : "The people were gradually deprived of their lands, and idleness and want left them without habitations."⁴ Horace preserves the picture of one of these evictions when he deplores the avarice through "which you even remove the land-marks of your neighbour's ground and trespass beyond the bounds of your clients. Wife and husband are turned out bearing in their bosoms their household goods and squalid children."⁵ Colonial assignments of land diminished and soon ceased altogether. No colony was founded after 157 B.C. The Gracchan efforts to distribute the *ager publicus* succeeded in settling the Italian domain question to a certain extent. With the exception of land in the neighbourhood of Tarentum and Capua, the Borian (and a subsequent) law extinguished *ager publicus* in Italy.⁶

By the operation of the "*Ius commercii*" in the provinces large holdings were made still larger. It is hard to appreciate the importance of this peculiarly protected legal position of *cives*. But with all competitors handicapped the citizens of Rome possessed an enormous advantage; and

¹Appian, *De Bell. Civ.*, I, xviii ; Livy, XLII, i, 6.

²Sallust, *Jug.*, XLI ; Seneca, *Ep.*, 90 ; Quint., *Apes Paup.*, *Declam.*, XIII.

³Sallust, *Fragm.*, XII.

⁴Sallust, *Ep. ad Caes.*, II, 5.

⁵Hor., *Carm.*, II, xviii, 23-8.

⁶Appian, *De Bell. Civ.*, I, xxvii.

land readily passed into the hands of wealthy Romans. Again, as the production of cereals ceased to be profitable, the Romans influenced by the spirit of speculation devoted their capital and energies first to the wholesale cultivation of the vine and the olive and then to grazing. Pasturage always demands wider areas than agriculture and, in the transition to grazing, *latifundia* became a necessity. Contemporaneous with the concentration of property was the increase in the number of slaves. Appian says, "The rich, getting possession of the greater part of the undistributed lands, and emboldened by the lapse of time to believe that they would never be dispossessed, added to their holdings the small farms of their poor neighbours partly by purchase, partly by violence. They came to cultivate vast tracts instead of single estates. They used for this purpose slaves as labourers and herdsmen, lest free labourers should be drawn from agriculture into the army. The ownership of slaves brought them great gain from the multitude of their progeny, who increased through exemption from military service. Thus the powerful became enormously rich; slaves multiplied throughout the country; but the Italian people, oppressed by penury, taxes and military service, dwindled in numbers and strength. During any respite from these evils they passed their time in idleness, because the land was held by the rich, and these employed slaves instead of freemen to till the soil." ¹

The uncertainty of the political conditions of the last century of the Republic brought no change. Sulla did not hesitate to revive the old plan of occupation; and in those dark days many managed to secure themselves extensive holdings.² That large estates grew and multiplied cannot be doubted. To what extent, however, this system of *latifundia* prevailed, it is impossible to determine with exactness. But Quintilian, in his *Apes Pauperis*, describes the plight of a poor man at law with a rich neighbour. The latter, annoyed by his neighbour's bees, had destroyed them. The poor man claimed that he

¹Appian, *De Bell. Civ.*, I, vii.

²Appian, *De Bell. Civ.*, I, c; Cic., *Ep. ad Att.*, I, xix, 4; Cic., *De Leg. Agrar.*, II, 26, 69.

had not been unwilling to abandon his ancestral plot of ground and establish his bees elsewhere—"I was unable," he protested however, "to find a single patch of land where I should not have a rich man for a neighbour."¹

Sicily was unique as the seat of the great plantation system. The investigations preceding the first Servile war show by anticipation all the abominations of modern peonage. The praetor was obliged to declare against the claimant in many cases, and when the cases multiplied, closed the investigation in a panic. The evil was wide-spread. "Powerful men," says Columella, "have estates like nations; they cannot encompass them on horseback"² (i.e., in a day). Six individuals, according to Pliny, possessed the half of Africa.³ These statements, although having reference primarily to the period of the early emperors, describe conditions differing only in degree from those of the last years of the Republic. In this connection, accordingly, we must attach special significance to the statement of Philippus, already quoted, that in 106 B.C. not two thousand people had wealth. The last days of the Republic, then, were not the days when every Roman was proud to till his farm. The times had changed since not fewer than sixteen of the Aelian family and name had only a small house and one farm.⁴ To counteract this evil of large estates agrarian legislation proved ineffectual.

c. Disappearance of Small Landowners

The obverse view of this tendency by which landed property was concentrated is the disappearance of the small farmer. The holdings in the early Republic were petty. The senator, even of consular dignity or the winner of a triumph, was regarded by Manius Curius as blameworthy if he possessed more than fifty jugera; whereas the citizen not satisfied with seven jugera was considered a menace to the state.⁵

¹XIII, iv.

²R.R. I, iii, 12.

³N.H., XVIII, 6, 35.

⁴Plut., *Aem. Paul.*, V, 4, 5; Val. Max., *Memor.*, IV, iv, 8.

⁵Pliny, N.H., XVIII, 4, 18; Val. Max., IV, iii, 5; Col., R.R., I, iii, 10.

To estimate the size of a peasant holding is difficult; but some considerations are of assistance. The equipment which Cato asks for his model olive farm of 240 jugera, is one *vilicus*, one *vilica*, five labourers, three workers with oxen, one ass-driver, one swine-herd, one shepherd, in all thirteen persons. We shall see later that the culture of the olive entailed but little labour. Thirteen workers for 240 jugera, therefore, was in most cases near the minimum equipment of the average farm in Cato's time.¹ On the other hand, the vineyard required a large equipment. To 100 jugera of vineyard Cato assigns one *vilicus*, one *vilica*, ten labourers, one worker with oxen, one ass-driver, one caretaker of willows, one swine-herd, in all sixteen persons.² For 240 jugera of vineyard the staff would be not much more than twice as great. Some of the workmen, indeed, and certainly the *vilicus* and *vilica*³ would not require to be duplicated. A sufficiently liberal estimate would place the equipment of 240 jugera of vineyard at about thirty-five workers. The range, therefore, for 240 jugera varies from thirteen labourers to about thirty-five, according as the crop is olives or vines. Now, Saserna states that one man will suffice for eight jugera.⁴ For 240 jugera, then, we should expect thirty workers besides the *vilicus* and *vilica*, or in all thirty-two persons. Saserna in another place gives us a basis for calculation which would seem to confirm the result obtained from Cato. Thus, when there was no orchard, for 200 jugera there would be two ox-drivers, six labourers, in all eight persons, besides the *vilicus* and *vilica*; with an orchard, 200 jugera require, apart from the *vilicus* and *vilica*, two ox-drivers, nine labourers, in all eleven persons. Apart from the *vilicus* and *vilica*, 240 jugera would demand, therefore, without the orchard, ten persons, with the orchard, thirteen. The equipment, therefore, for a farm of 240 jugera with an orchard would be one *vilicus*, one *vilica*, and thirteen labourers. This result does not differ

¹Cato, *R.R.*, X, 1.

²Cato, *R.R.*, XI, 1.

³Varro, *R.R.*, I, xviii, 2, 3.

⁴Varro, *R.R.*, I, xviii, 2.

substantially from Cato's estimate, if we bear in mind that Cato's farm is wholly that of the easily cultivated olive.¹ Varro, however, states that this number might suffice for the plains of Gaul but would be inadequate for mountainous districts.² In conclusion, to leave out of consideration the *vilicus* and *vilica*, for a farm of 240 jugera the minimum equipment is from eleven to thirteen persons; the maximum from thirty to about thirty-five. The average equipment on a non-specialized farm was thus from about eighteen to about twenty-two persons. A small property, then, of about fourteen or fifteen jugera could support a man. With intensive cultivation,³ and by occasionally hiring himself out to rich neighbours, as we shall see was possible, a small proprietor could obtain a bare existence for himself and family from fourteen or fifteen jugera. The family did not prove a serious burden for they helped to till the fields or were hired to neighbours.⁴ In confirmation of these conclusions we have the distinct statement of Marius recorded by Plutarch that fourteen jugera were sufficient to support one (family ?).⁵

In the early Republic war had forced the small proprietor to neglect the cultivation of his petty holding; incursions of enemies had further diminished his crops; while the slack payment of the dues for public land increased the proportion of the war-tax which he was called upon to pay. Compelled by the pinch of hunger to borrow from rich neighbours he soon found himself overwhelmed with debt. In the last centuries of the Republic longer campaigns, which were waged not against Italian neighbours but beyond the limits of Italy, kept the husbandman completely away from his farm. How active Roman warfare actually was may be inferred from the circumstance that one of the qualifications for such military officers as the military tribunate was to have served, in some instances

¹Col., *R.R.*, II, xii, 7.

²Varro, *R.R.*, I, xviii, 6.

³Thus C. Furius Cresimus with intensive cultivation obtained so much more ample returns from a small farm than his neighbours from their more extensive ones that he was accused of witch-craft.—Pliny, *N.H.*, XVIII, 41-43.

⁴Varro, *R.R.*, I, xvii, 2.

⁵Plut., *Crass.*, II, 8.

five, in others, ten yearly campaigns.¹ These wars destroyed agriculture, ruined the small land-owners, and wasted human life. Moreover, dazzled by the prospect of the spoils of war, petty proprietors became professional soldiers. A military career offered many enticements. In 171 B.C. many voluntarily enrolled, because those who had seen service in the previous Macedonian war and the war against Antiochus returned home rich.² The camp is a poor training for other pursuits. Not merely did the monotony of the life of a peasant henceforth prove unattractive to the war-worn veterans, but, often with health broken, they themselves were wholly unsuited, if not unfit, for its labours and duties. It was more exciting to enlist as volunteers or drift to Rome to join the idlers of the metropolis, than to settle down to a life which economic tendencies were rendering unprofitable as well as dull.³

To the competition of slave-labour was added the competition of provincial grain. Even the lack of roads made the difficulties attending the supply of the capital with Italian corn enormous. In response to the city's efforts to secure a cheap food supply the stores of Sicily and Sardinia poured into Rome and the ruin of the small land-owner was completed. To counteract this evil new farms were assigned in the domain land. The distribution of the Picentian possessions by Gaius Flaminius in 232 B.C., the colonization of the region between the Apennines and the Po by the establishment in 218 B.C. of Placentia, Cremona,⁴ Bononia and Aquileia, in 189-177 B.C. of Potentia, Pisaurum, Mutina, Parma and Luna, the founding of eight maritime colonies in 194 B.C., all offered some relief, but the Gracchan situation is merely the situation of 367 B.C. on a larger scale. Now all Italy was affected.

This was the problem that confronted the Gracchi and the reformers who succeeded them—the recreation of a farming peasantry or the establishment of a class of small farmers in Italy. The Sempronian Law of 133 B.C. enacted that no one

¹Polyb., VI, v, 19, 1.

²Livy, XLIII, xxxii, 6.

³Livy, XXVII, xlv; XXXVII, iv.

⁴Livy, XX.

should occupy more than 500 jugera of the *ager publicus*, with 250 for each son, the total allotment not to exceed 1,000 jugera. The rest of the land was divided into inalienable hereditary leaseholds of thirty jugera.¹ On the death of Tiberius the land-board prosecuted with energy the distribution of the *ager publicus* and as a consequence the number of peasant landholders increased greatly. Caius restored to the board their jurisdiction² after it had suffered a temporary eclipse, but the small increase in the roll of citizens would indicate that few allocations of land occurred under Caius,—his remedy was colonization. Shortly after, Thorius abolished the land-board altogether and those who occupied the *ager publicus* paid into the treasury a definite rental. The disappearance of the peasant class continued unabated. Such a misfortune had far-reaching effects; it will be hard to find any compensating circumstances. In some cases, doubtless, the small landowner became the *vilicus* on a great estate; more commonly, however, because he would demand a salary and was liable to military service, he was superseded by the slave.³ With the small estate disappeared from the soil of Italy the sturdy population. It was only here and there that, in spite of economic conditions, a small proprietor eked out an existence, to furnish to the fancies of a Horace the fascinating picture of a man, who, remote from business, after the manner of the ancient race of mortals cultivated his paternal land with his own oxen.⁴

d. The Abandonment of Agriculture

The growth of large estates and the disappearance of small land-owners meant for Rome the abandonment of agriculture; it meant the beginning of decay. In their early history agriculture had supplied the necessities of life : for its luxuries they had not yet developed a taste. In the days

¹Appian, *De Bell. Civ.*, I, ix-xi.

²Plut., *C. Gracch.*, V, 1 ; C. I. L., I, 551.

³Appian, *De Bell. Civ.*, I, vii et x.

⁴*Epod.*, II, 1-3.

when faulty tillage fell under the notice of the censor the intense spade-cultivation of a Cincinnatus had given Rome a food supply independent of other countries.¹

In the last two centuries of the Republic, however, there was a marked decadence. Even in the course of a single life-time farming underwent a great change. For while Cato was still young, agriculture yielded considerable profit; when he was old, it was looked upon as theory and amusement.² In a list of great importance this author has arranged according to profit the products of a farm one hundred jugera in extent; vineyard, well-watered garden, willow-plantation,³ olive-garden, meadow-land, corn-ground, trees for fire-wood, trees for vines, and lastly, acorn groves.⁴ It is notable that meadow-land is given the preference to corn-land. Cicero tells the story that when Cato was questioned as to what was the very best way to invest money, he replied,—“In good pasturage.” “What next?” “In fairly good pasturage.” “What third?” “In poor pasturage.” “What fourth?” “In tillage.”⁵ In Cato’s time, therefore, it is more profitable to graze than to produce cereals. And what is to be expected but that land should go out of cultivation? Can we wonder, then, at the desolate aspect of Etruria as seen by Tiberius Gracchus?⁶

By the time of Varro economic tendencies had advanced meadow-land from fifth in order of gains to first!⁷ Grazing had become the most profitable method of exploiting land. As to vineyards, to which Cato had given preeminence, some even fancied that they cost as much as they produced.⁸ In his treatment of the *Res Rustica*, or rural economy, Varro well reflects the economic tendencies of the times. His work

¹Pliny, *N.H.*, XVIII, 3, 11; 4, 15; Aulugellus, IV, 12.

²Plut., *Cato Mai.*, XXV, 1.

³Profitable, because the willow was used for basket-making and vines were bound to it (Cato, *R.R.*, VI, 4).

⁴Cato, *R.R.*, I, 7.

⁵Cic., *De Offic.*, II, 25.

⁶Plut., *Tib. Gracch.*, VIII, 7.

⁷Varro, *R.R.*, I, vii, 10.

⁸Varro, *R.R.*, I, viii, 1.

falls into three divisions, in which he treats separately *agricultura*, or tillage, *res pecuaria*, or pasturage, and *villaticae pastiones*, the rearing of animals and poultry.¹ He himself recommends the farmer to combine all three to produce good results.² He informs us, nevertheless, that to rear cattle, chickens and doves, would yield a greater profit than to till the fields.³ Parks, gardens, and fish-ponds were displacing cultivated fields. The rich were fish-breeders; their supreme delight was to have bearded mullets that would feed out of the hand.⁴ We must remember that though Varro claims somewhat extravagantly that in his time Italy was the most extensively cultivated land in the world,⁵ yet it is Varro, too, who utters the complaint that rural occupations had been abandoned. "Even fathers of families," he protests,⁶ "have left the sickle and the plough, and have crept within the city. While they prefer to ply their hands in applause in the theatre and the circus, rather than in handling the crops and the vintage, we let out the contract for provisions from Africa and Sardinia; and our wine we store in ships laden from Cos and Chios."

The decadence of agriculture, did not of course, cease with Horace's plaint, that but few acres were being left for the plough, while on all sides were ponds "greater than the Lucrine Lake," and violet beds and myrtle groves were ousting olive plantations;⁷ nor yet with Vergil's prayer that Caesar might rescue a ruined world, "harassed by wars, where the ploughman's meed of honour is departed, the fields are mantled with weeds, for the tillers are off to the war and bent sickles are forged into stiff sword-blades."⁸ For in the first century of the Empire Columella protested that owners disdained to till the soil, and Rome had become dependent on the provinces,

¹Varro, *R.R.*, I, i, 11.

²Varro, *R.R.*, II, *Praef.*, 5.

³Varro., *R.R.*, III, ii, 10 et 13.

⁴Cic., *Ep. ad Att.*, I, xix, 6; II, 1, 7.

⁵Varro, *R.R.*, I, ii, 3.

⁶Varro, *R.R.*, II, *Praef.* 3.

⁷Hor., *Carm.*, II, xv, 1-8.

⁸Verg., *Georg.*, I, 505-8.

and was supported by transmarine corn and wine from the Cyclades, Spain and Gaul.¹ Moreover, there were circumstances that helped to perpetuate these conditions. The increasingly unhealthy character of the regions abandoned to pasturage as well as the viciously inadequate system of shares which yielded the *politor* or *partiaris* or cultivator only one-ninth to one-fifth of the produce, operated to prevent a return to tillage.

We may conclude with Varro, "So then, in this land, wherein shepherds, who founded the city of Rome, taught their children the tillage of the fields there, in turn, their descendants in their avarice have despised the laws, have transformed the cultivable land to pasturage. They know not, forsooth, that agriculture and grazing are not identical. For a herdsman is one thing, and a ploughman another."²

e. Importation of Corn from the Provinces

To have a cheap food supply was the fixed policy of Rome. The small farmer might be ruined, distributions might prove demoralizing but corn must be cheap—the city proletariat must be kept quiet. While the habits of the Romans were still simple, the products of Italy fully satisfied their needs;³ but with the acquisition of her first provinces, the payment of tribute in kind offered a temptation to which Rome all too readily succumbed.

As early as the time of the Punic wars, Rome had received large supplies of corn from Etruria, Sicily, Sardinia, Africa and Spain.⁴ The allies of inner Sicily were obliged to furnish corn;⁵ Hiero sent provisions from Syracuse;⁶ and throughout this encounter Sicily served as the granary for Rome.⁷ To Cato, Sicily was the storehouse of provisions

¹Col., *R.R.*, I, *Praef.*, 12 et 20.

²Varro, *R.R.*, II, *Praef.*, 4.

³Pliny, *N.H.*, XVIII, 15.

⁴Livy, XXIII, xxxii, 9; xli, 6; XXV, xv, 4; xx, 3; xxii, 5; xxxi, 14; XXVII, iii, 9; XXX, iii, 2; xxiv, 5.

⁵Polyb., *Bell. Pun.*, I, lii, 8.

⁶Polyb., *Bell. Pun.*, I, xvi, 6-7; Livy, XXII, xxxvii, 1.

⁷Cic., *In C. Verr.*, II, ii, 1, 3.

for the Republic, the nurse of the Roman people;¹ while in times of war, it furnished Rome not only with provisions but with hides, tunics and clothes.² Pompey collected vast quantities of corn in Sicily, Sardinia and Africa,³ and when, owing to Rome's dependence on her provincial supply of corn, the pirates threatened her with famine, in this economic crisis Pompey reaped the benefit in Rome's first declaration for monarchy.⁴ Of the provinces that supplied Rome with corn, Sicily, Sardinia and Africa were the chief,—“the granaries of the republic,” according to Cicero.⁵ Recognizing the importance of Sicily and Sardinia as grain-producing islands, Caesar hastened to secure them for himself.⁶ Sicily ranked first in importance,⁷ then Sardinia, which for levies of corn is generally mentioned with Sicily.⁸ All three paid a tenth in kind,⁹ but Spain paid a tenth of its small products such as wine and oil, and only a twentieth of its grain.¹⁰ Varro says that in his time corn came from Africa and Sardinia, and wine was brought from Cos and Chios.¹¹ In addition, individual cities to gain the good-will of the Roman people frequently sent supplies to the capital. Thus Gades gave relief at a time when corn was dear.¹² Rome came to draw supplies from all the provinces bordering on the eastern basin of the Mediterranean.¹³ The full result of the growing importations from the provinces is seen in the first century of the Empire. For, as Tacitus complains,¹⁴ Italy subsisted only on the products of a strange soil so that each day the life of the Roman people was at the mercy of waves and storms; and Columella pro-

¹Cic., *In C. Verr.*, II, ii, 2, 5.

²Ibid.

³Plut., *Pomp.*, L, 1.

⁴Plut., *Pomp.*, XLIX, 4; Livy, CIV; Appian, *De Bell. Civ.*, II, xviii.

⁵Cic., *De Domo sua*, X, 25; *Pro Leg. Man.*, XII, 34.

⁶Florus, *Epit.*, II, 13 (iv, 2); Appian, *De Bell. Civ.*, II, 40.

⁷Cic., *In C. Verr.*, II, iii, 19, 48; 5, 11.

⁸Livy, XXXVII, 1, 9, 10; XLII, xxxi, 8.

⁹Livy, XLI, xvii; Cic., *In C. Verr.*, II, iii, 8, 20; *Pro Balbo*, xviii, 41.

¹⁰Livy, XLII, ii, 12.

¹¹Varro, *R.R.*, II, *Praef.*, 3; Livy, XXXVI, iv, 5-9.

¹²Cic., *Pro Balbo*, XVII, 40.

¹³Cic., *Ep. ad Att.*, IX, ix, 2.

¹⁴Tac., *Ann.*, III, 54.

tests that only contracts for corn from the transmarine provinces saved Rome from famine.¹ But even as early as 65 B.C. Cicero could declare that Rome was absolutely dependent on her imported supply of grain,² and that the real republic was to be found no longer in Rome but rather in the provinces.³

Such quantities of corn poured into Rome that the market was glutted and the price exceedingly low. Caesar said that each year Africa could supply 200,000 Attic measures of wheat and 3,000,000 pounds of oil.⁴ In 203 B.C. corn from Spain,⁵ in 201 B.C. corn from Africa,⁶ was distributed at the rate of four asses per modius; and a year later, corn from Africa could be obtained at two asses per modius,⁷ while in 196 B.C. a million modii were supplied at the same price.⁸ Occasionally so much corn came from Sicily and Sardinia that the merchants received from the sale of the cargo only sufficient to pay the mariners for the mere freight.⁹ The fact that Rome was dependent upon transmarine provinces for the food supply caused wide fluctuations in prices. When pirates threatened the corn fleets, Rome was in constant danger of famine. Prices rose, only to fall immediately when corn arrived from the provinces, or the state interfered to protect the transports.¹⁰

f. The Distribution of Corn

Important in contributing alike to the decay of agriculture in Italy and the demoralization of the inhabitants of the metropolis was the distribution of corn. We have already stated that during the second Punic war vast quantities of corn were handed over to the people of Rome at rates so ex-

¹Col., *R.R.*, *Praef.*, 20.

²Cic., *Pro Leg. Man.*, XII, 33.

³Cic., *Ep. ad Fam.*, XV, xx, 2.

⁴Plut., *J. Caes.*, LV, 1.

⁵Livy, XXX, xxvi, 6.

⁶Livy, XXXI, iv, 6.

⁷Livy, XXXI, 1, 1.

⁸Livy, XXXIII, xlii, 8.

⁹Livy, XXX, xxxviii, 5.

¹⁰Cic., *Pro Cn. Planc.*, XXVI, 64 ; Plut., *Pomp.*, XXVI, 2.

tremely low that competition on the part of Italian agriculture must have been utterly hopeless. The removal of the small land-owner to the city served only to augment a class unable to purchase their own corn.

We are aware of no organized effort to distribute corn to the people until the time of Caius Gracchus. It was his desire to institute a largess controlled by the state. He was forced, however, to content himself with the Sempronian Law which established monthly sales of corn at six and one-third asses per modius.¹ The persistent effort to introduce legislation to deal with this problem shows how vital to Rome was the question of the distribution of corn. Saturninus in 100 B.C. and M. Livius Drusus in 91 B.C. proposed measures, but the *Lex Appuleia* of the former did not become law,² while the *Lex Livia* was never put into practice.³ M. Octavius' measure to restrict the sale-distributions of corn⁴ was followed in 82 B.C. by their abolition by Sulla's *Lex Cornelia*.⁵ It is a testimony, however, at once to the growing political power and to the increasing inability of the metropolitan poor to purchase foodstuffs that nine years later, in 73 B.C., the *Lex Terentia Cassia* practically re-enacted, in all probability, the Sempronian Law of Gracchus⁶ and made provision that governors of Sicily should attend to Rome's food supply.

For the favour of the metropolitan proletariat, party-leaders in the last half-century of the Republic were willing to bid high. To win the poor was the purpose of the threat of Caesar in 59 B.C. that he would institute gratuitous largesses.⁷ A year later the *Lex Clodia* carried out this threat at a cost to the state of one-fifth of its revenues.⁸ This, the first *lex frumentaria* which did not provide for selling corn

¹Livy, *ex Lib.*, LX; Vell. Pater., II, 6, 3; Plut., *C. Gracch.*, V, 1; Appian, *De Bell. Civ.*, I, xxi.

²Cic., *ad Herenn.*, I, 12; *De Legg.*, II, 6, 14.

³Livy, *Epit.*, LXX et LXXI.

⁴Cic., *De Off.*, II, 21; *Brut.*, LXII, 222.

⁵Sallust, *Hist. Fragm.*, I, 57, 11 (ed. Maurenbrecher).

⁶Cic., *In C. Verr.*, II, iii, 70; v, 21.

⁷Cic., *Ep. ad Att.*, II, 19.

⁸Ascon., *In Pison.*, §9, ed. Orelli; Cic., *Pro Sest.*, XXV; Dion Cass., *Hist. Rom.*, XXXVIII, 13.

to the people, was largely indiscriminate in its application; but Pompey in 57 B.C. made it even still more so,—he removed from recipients all restrictions.¹

Thus corn cost Rome much in money,—nearly \$1,500,000 a year;² its free distribution cost her far more in the deterioration of moral vigour and in economic disability. Multitudes flocked to Rome to share in the largesses. Julius Caesar appreciated this evil and, on the establishment of his power, excluded from the lists of applicants for bounty all who were unable to establish their Roman citizenship; the number of those who could partake of state-corn gratuitously was reduced from 320,000 to 150,000. The latter was fixed as the maximum number of citizens who might participate in the Republic's bounty. He enacted that, when death occasioned vacancies in the number, the *praetor urbanus* should fill the positions by lot.³ After Julius Caesar's death the number of the recipients of the state's bounty increased. The purchase of corn exhausted the treasury,⁴ its distribution sapped the energy of the state. But the people themselves lost both inclination and capacity for serious work.⁵ Augustus realized the curse as much as Julius, but distribution was a fixed policy of the Empire.

g. Substitution of Grazing for Arable Land

The positive aspect of the economic movement which resulted in the abandonment of agriculture is the substitution of grazing for arable land. Meadow-land among the Romans was always considered of prime importance in agriculture.⁶ We may recall here the remark of Cato, who, on being asked what part of husbandry would quickly lead to wealth, replied "Good grazing;" and when questioned as to what would yield a fairly good income, answered "Moderate Grazing."⁷

¹Dion Cass., *Hist. Rom.*, XXXIX, 24.

²Plut., *J. Caes.*, viii, 4 ; *Cat. Min.*, XXVI, 1.

³Suet., *J. Caes.*, XLI, ; Dio. Cass., *Hist. Rom.*, XLIII, 21, 4.

⁴Florus, *Epit.*, III, 13.

⁵Suet., *Octav. Aug.*, XLII.

⁶Col., *R.R.*, II, xvi (xvii).

⁷Col., *R.R.*, VI. *Praef.*, 4 ; Cic., *De Off.*, II, 25, 89.

For this reason he recommends that meadows be laid out as extensively as possible. "To your utmost," he urges, "make well watered meadows if you have water; but if you can procure no water, make as many dry meadows as you can. This style of farm will pay you."¹ In Varro's time, indeed, Scrofa preferred good meadows to vineyards because they entailed little or no expense,² while people in general did not recognize the distinction between agriculture and pasturage. Agriculture was coming more and more to mean pasturage.³ How large the herds may have been in the last century of the Republic would seem to be indicated by the circumstance that under Augustus a freedman Caecilius owned 3,600 yoke of oxen and 257,000 other cattle.⁴

As early as the second Punic war pastures were found in the neighbourhood of Croton.⁵ The fields of Rosea were highly esteemed for their rich grasses,⁶ in "scorched Calabria" were reared goodly flocks.⁷ Reate produced the best and largest asses,⁸ Umbria, sheep,⁹ while the fleeces of Tarentum's flocks were so valuable that they were covered with skins.¹⁰ By the time of Columella, however, the sheep of Gaul had surpassed those of Calabria, Apulia and Tarentum.¹¹ Varro himself possessed pastures for sheep in Apulia and for horses in Reate.¹² The various flocks and herds had different pasture lands in winter and summer.¹³ "In spring," says Varro, "oxen pasture to best advantage in woods with young branches and heavy foliage; they winter beside the sea; in

¹Cato, *R.R.*, IX.

²Varro, *R.R.*, I, vii, 10. }

³Varro, *R.R.*, *Praef.*, 4.

⁴Pliny, *N.H.*, xxxiii, 47.

⁵Livy, XXIV, iii, 4.

⁶Pliny, *N.H.*, xvii, 32.

⁷Hor., *Carm.*, I, xxxi, 5.

⁸Varro, *R.R.*, II, vi, 1.

⁹Varro, *R.R.*, II, ix, 6.

¹⁰Varro, *R.R.*, II, ii, 18; Col., *R.R.*, VII, ii, 3; Pliny, *N.H.*, viii, 48, 190; Strabo, *Geog.*, VI, c. 284.

¹¹Col., *R.R.*, VII, ii, 3.

¹²Varro, *R.R.*, II, *Praef.*, 6.

¹³Varro, *R.R.*, II, i, 16.

summer they are taken back to woody mountains.¹ '' Flocks which wintered in Apulia were taken for the summer to Samnium,² or even to the mountains of Reate.³ Mules were driven in summer from the plain of Rosea to the high mountains, Gurgures;⁴ while Horace tells us of cattle which changed the Calabrian for the Lucanian pastures before the scorching dog-star came on.⁵ Up to the time of the extinction of the *ager publicus* in Italy when flocks were thus driven from one pasturage to another it was necessary under penalty of a fine by the censor to register the flocks with the public officer who collected the *scriptura* or pasture tax.⁶ In Sicily, when the slaves revolted, the possessors of the pastures were, for the most part, Roman knights.⁷ It is not unlikely that in Italy also it was the knights who held most of the grazing lands.

h. Population

During this period economic forces in Italy were producing two results : the population kept drifting from the country to the metropolis, and the total number of her free citizens in the peninsula was diminishing.

In 405 B.C., we are informed by Livy, the allies refused their quota of soldiers: but in the city and its territory the consuls suddenly raised ten legions of 4,200 infantry and 300 knights, in all 45,000 men—'a conscription,' declares our author, 'which the same country could not furnish to-day, even should a foreign invasion assail, and that, too, despite Rome's conquest of the world. Luxury and riches have indeed increased, but they have exhausted us.'⁸

As early as 367 B.C., as we have seen, legislation had made it compulsory to employ free labour.⁹ During the

¹Varro, *R.R.*, II, v, 11.

²Varro, *R.R.*, II, i, 16.

³Varro, *R.R.*, II, ii, 9.

⁴Varro, *R.R.*, II, i, 16.

⁵Hor., *Epodes*, I, 27, 28.

⁶Varro, *R.R.*, II, i, 16.

⁷Diod. Sic., *Eclogae*, XXXIV, 11.

⁸Livy, VII, xxv, 8, 9

⁹Appian, *De Bell. Civ.*, I, viii.

second Punic war a considerable portion of the rural population fled to the capital from the fields wasted by long war and hostile occupation.¹ Out of the thirty colonies of Rome in 209 B.C. twelve declared their utter inability to contribute soldiers;² after the battle at the Metaurus in 206 B.C. the senate caused the consuls to send the labouring population back to the fields.³ Two years of this struggle were sufficient to entail a loss of 100,000 men.⁴ The senate, finally, was reduced to such straits that with the owners' consent it freed 8,000 slaves.⁵

In 187 B.C., envoys of the Latin confederates complained that great numbers of their citizens had moved to Rome. Thereupon the praetor ordered the return to their several states of all that the allies could prove to have been rated by either themselves or their fathers in the census, during, or subsequent to, the censorship of Caius Claudius and Marcus Livius. Twelve thousand Latins returned: "so much," observes Livy,⁶ "was the city even at that early period burdened by an influx of foreigners." In 177 B.C., again, the Latins complained that their citizens had flocked to Rome. If this were tolerated, they protested, they would be unable to furnish their quota of soldiers.⁷ Their fears were not groundless: in the levies of 180 B.C.⁸ and 174 B.C.⁹ there was much difficulty in completing the legions. It was this visible depopulation of Italy that moved Tiberius Gracchus.¹⁰ Passing through Etruria to Numantia he found the country almost bare, with scarcely a husbandman or shepherd except slaves.¹¹ The aim of his legislation was to restore

¹Livy, XXV, i, 8.

²Livy, XXVII, ix, 7.

³Livy, XXVIII, xi, 8 *et* 9.

⁴Appian, *De Bell. Hann.*, VII, 25.

⁵Livy, XXII, lvii, 11; Appian, *De Bell. Hann.*, VII, 27.

⁶Livy, XXXIX, iii, 4-6.

⁷Livy, XLI, viii, 7.

⁸Livy, XL, xxxvi, 13 *et* 14.

⁹Livy, XLI, xxi, 5.

¹⁰Appian, *De Bell. Civ.*, I, ix.

¹¹Plut., *Tib. Gracch.*, VIII, 7.

a free population.¹ Land, he declared, should be bestowed as a gift on men who would rear children.² With the same purpose Caius Gracchus forbade enlistment under the age of seventeen.³ The closing of the land question by the legislation of 111 B.C. accentuated the decrease in population.⁴ It was in reference to this period that Plutarch stated that all Italy was on the verge of seeing itself depopulated of free men, and filled with slaves and barbarians.⁵

Although the property qualifications necessary for admission to the army had already been reduced, owing to the scarcity of men, on the news of Arausio, Marius took the fundamental step of opening the army to all citizens without property qualifications whatever.⁶ Sulla recruited the senate, thinned by seditions and wars, by adding three hundred members from the knights; he granted citizenship to ten thousand slaves of proscribed persons; and attempted to distribute population throughout the country by giving land to the twenty-three legions which had served under him.⁷ In his distribution of land Julius Caesar favoured those with large families. To check the decrease in population he forbade any person between the ages of twenty and forty years, unless in military service, to remain out of Italy for a period of more than three years. Except in the retinue of a magistrate he did not permit the son of any senator to go abroad.⁸ He ordered graziers to have at least one-third of their shepherds free men. To retain those who practised medicine and the arts, to attract others to the city, he presented them with full citizenship. Finally, he drove half of the poor out of Rome.⁹ The necessity of Caesar's measures to prevent the diminution of population is evident from the statement, doubtless highly exaggerated

¹Appian, *De Bell. Civ.*, I, xi.

²Appian, *De Bell. Civ.*, I, xi.

³Plut., *C. Gracch.*, V, 1.

⁴Appian, *De Bell. Civ.*, I, xxvii.

⁵Plut., *Tib. Gracch.*, VIII, 3.

⁶Sallust, *Bell. Jug.*, 86.

⁷Appian, *De Bell. Civ.*, I, c.

⁸Thus, also, Augustus later forbade the senators to leave Italy: Dio. Cass., *Hist. Rom.*, LII, 42, 56; LV, 26, 1.

⁹Sueton., *J. Caes.*, XX et XLII; Appian, *De Bell. Civ.*, II, x.

but nevertheless founded on fact, that an enumeration of the people after the civil wars of Pompey and Caesar showed a decline of one-half during this struggle.¹ Though the population as a whole thus decreased, the country folk kept drifting to the metropolis.²

Life in the country had become a difficult problem for the free man. Luxury was increasing and spreading; the precious metals were pouring in; prices were inflated; on every side the great proprietors were encroaching; and slaves were gradually depriving him and his sons of all chance of eking out a living. What wonder, then, that the eyes of the petty proprietor should turn hopefully to the metropolis with the pleasures of the theatre and the circus, with its cheap food supply and bounteous largesses?³ Here was centred the administration of the world; and Latium and the regions near Rome poured not only their best blood but also their degenerate peasantry into the metropolis to serve as clients of ambitious families and to furnish ballast to the contending political parties. Sallust's picture needs no comment:—'The city populace had become disaffected for various reasons. For into Rome as the sink of the world had poured the leaders in crime and profligacy, with those whose fortunes dissipation had squandered, and, in a word, all whom vice or villainy had driven from their homes. Others had seen the success of Sulla raise common soldiers to senators, and establish individuals in regal luxury and pomp, and by this hope were induced to take up arms. In addition to this, there was the youth, who by manual labour had eked out a scanty existence in the country, and who now was tempted by the prospect of public and private largesses to prefer idleness in the city to unwelcome toil in the fields.'⁴

The diminution in Rome's population is contemporaneous with the expansion of Roman power. In a service

¹Appian, *De Bell. Civ.*, II, cii; Plut., *J. Caes.*, LV, 3.

²Varro, *R.R.*, II, *Praef.*, 3.

³Appian, *De Bell. Civ.*, II, cxx; Diod., XXXVII, 3.

⁴Col., *R.R.*, I, i, 19.

⁵Sallust, *Cat.*, XXXVII.

where none between seventeen and forty-five years could refuse enrolment, wars wrought cruel havoc with human life. The bloody encounters of Trasymenus and Cannae made terrible gaps in the citizen body.¹ It became more and more impossible to enforce enlistment. In the conquest of the provinces and in the civil wars² some of her best citizens lost their lives; while proscriptions destroyed many of those that escaped. Her able men poured forth to seek opportunities in the provinces; the provinces in return gave to Rome the dregs of their population.³

The congestion of population in Rome and the decrease in the number of her citizens were matters of serious difficulty. Cicero believed that the agrarian law of Flavius had two good features,—the dregs would be drawn from the city and the deserted districts of Italy repopulated.⁴ Horace, with true insight, saw that the problem was largely moral.⁵ As early as 132 B.C., Q. Metellus had detected a tendency to celibacy, and, to increase the population of the state, urged that every one should be compelled to marry.⁶ Augustus found that the unmarried knights outnumbered the married.⁷ In a speech delivered at a period when this tendency to celibacy could be more clearly observed, after setting forth the advantages of the excellent spouse and the joys of possessing children, he promises rewards and embellishments to those who become fathers. As for celibates he will not call them men; he must not call them citizens; he dare not call them Romans. It is men that make a city and not houses nor porches nor market-places, bereft of men. It is not right or seemly that the Roman race should cease and their name be blotted out from the earth. "We manumit our slaves," he urges, "for this reason above all, to augment our citizen body to the very fullest; and we share our citizenship among our allies to swell

¹Livy, XXII, vii, 2 ; xlix, 15.

²Lucan, *Phars.*, I, 24-32.

³Of a later time Lucan writes in *Phars.*, VII, 404-5.

⁴Cic., *Ep. ad Att.*, I, 19, 4.

⁵*Carm.*, I, ii, 23-4.

⁶Livy, *ex Lib.*, LIX.

⁷Dio. Cass., *Hist. Rom.*, LVI, 1, 2.

our numbers. But you yourselves, you Romans of the original stock, who tell among your ancestors the Marcii, the Fabii, the Quintii, the Valerii, and the Julii, you desire that together with yourselves the race and name of Rome should perish." ¹ To curb the evil, Augustus put heavy encumbrances upon men and women who were not married; established rewards for marriage and child-bearing; ² granted recognition to all parents, and especial distinction to those who had several children. His own wife, Livia, he enrolled among mothers who had brought forth three children. ³ The tendency to celibacy is largely responsible for the decline in the Roman citizen body. Moral and economic causes were inextricably combined.

i. Slavery

The Romans of the earlier period neither possessed nor needed many slaves. ⁴ Not only was the extent of early slavery very limited, its character was largely innocent. Often close bonds of sympathy held together slave and master, doubtless, at times, even bonds of kinship. In some cases the slave rewarded his master for his kindly treatment by his careful stewardship of his petty estate when state duties enforced the absence of the proprietor. ⁵ Many Roman citizens suffered an incapacity by reason of debt. ⁶ Usury placed them in the virtual position of slaves, for the Roman law for debt operated continuously. But the day of slavery for debt practically passed when the horizon of Rome's dominions extended throughout the peninsula and around the Mediterranean. Foreign conquest developed a traffic in slaves. Hitherto they had rarely been bought and sold. With the arrival of foreign slaves the capitalist began to trade in human lives. By the third and second centuries B.C. the slave trade had pervaded the state to such an extent that a tax on manumissions became

¹Dion Cass., *Hist. Rom.*, LVI, ii-ix.

²Dio. Cass., *Hist. Rom.*, LIV, xvi, 1.

³Dio. Cass., *Hist. Rom.*, LV, ii, 5-6.

⁴Val. Max., *Memor.*, IV, iv, 11.

⁵Val. Max., *Memor.*, IV, iv, 6.

⁶Livy, II, xxiii, 6.

a source of income to the treasury.¹ Though Plautus might stigmatize the commerce,² Cato the censor engaged in it and realized large profits by training slaves "like young dogs."³ The system of agriculture which he recommended in his *De Re Rustica* was based wholly on slave labour. The *vilicus*, for instance, was highest in authority and a slave withal. The slave, indeed, was an important and essential feature of the agricultural and industrial economy of the last two centuries of the Republic because, owing to his exemption from military service, he could not be withdrawn from his work.⁴ What more convincing evidence, what more startling result of the existence of more slaves within the state could be sought than such dangerous slave conspiracies as those in Latium in 198 B.C.⁵ and in Etruria in 196 B.C.⁶ The shepherd slaves were the most lawless and rendered Lucania so unsafe that in 185 B.C. the praetor, Lucius Postumius, had to be sent against them. Seven thousand were punished and many executed.⁷ In the great Servile war of 134-132 B.C. four thousand slaves were executed in Sinuessa alone. The slave recruits of Spartacus in southern Italy even defeated Roman armies,⁸ while against the Roman knights Catiline could rouse the slaves in Campania and Picenum, and the shepherds in Apulia.⁹ "And what shall we say," asks Florus, "as to the wars with the slaves? How did they come upon us but from their excessive number?"¹⁰ Livy bears testimony to the displacement in many districts of the free population by slaves.¹¹ In fact, the test of a rich family became in the last century of the Republic the number of its slaves;¹² and the

¹Livy, VII, xvi, 7; manumission was a speculation on the industry of the person freed.

²Plaut., *Capt.*, I, 1, 30-1.

³Plut., *Cato Mai.*, xxi, 1.

⁴Appian, *De Bell. Civ.*, I, vii.

⁵Livy, XXXII, xxvi, 4.

⁶Livy, XXXIII, xxxvi, 1.

⁷Livy, XXXIX, xxix, 8.

⁸Livy, *ex Lib.*, XCV et XCVI.

⁹Sallust., *Cat.*, xxvii et xxx.

¹⁰Flor., *Epit.*, III, 12.

¹¹Livy, VI, xii, 5.

¹²Hor., *Epod.*, II, 65.

freeman Caecilius, though he lost heavily in the civil wars, could leave behind at his death four thousand one hundred and sixteen slaves.¹

Through the introduction of slaves the tendency to *latifundia* was increased and accelerated. They were cheap, easily obtained and not liable to military service. For since by the law of nations prisoners of war became the slaves of the victors,² Rome's conquests soon filled the slave-marts, and her citizens became eager purchasers.³ The supply was inexhaustible, the demand had its limitations. And Tiberius Sempronius Gracchus, consul in 177 B.C., took so many captive in the war against the Sardinians that the market was glutted;⁴ while Lucullus obtained a booty so considerable in the Mithradatic war that a slave brought only four drachmae.⁵ After the capture of Cartagena in 210 B.C., the general declared two thousand artisans slaves of the Roman people.⁶ After the fall of Corinth and Carthage Delos was the chief mart for the slave traffic. When the Cilician pirates—virtual slave dealers—had possession of the Mediterranean, as many as ten thousand slaves are said to have been imported and sold there in a single day.⁷ The prisoners made by Rome's successive victories swelled the number while the continuous wars drained her of her free labourers. Her free men decreased; the slaves multiplied and took the free men's places.

Roman slaves were either public or private, that is, belonged either to the state or to an individual.⁸ Each Roman household, indeed, generally contained several who performed a variety of duties.⁹ A mistress in one of Plautus' comedies cannot tolerate a domestic slave unless she can weave, grind, cut fire-wood, crush grain, sweep the house, take a flogging,

¹Pliny, *N.H.*, XXXIII, 47.

²*Inst.*, II, i. 17.

³Plaut., *Capt.*, 34; *Epid.*, 44; Livy, XXXIX, xlii, 1; XLI, xi, 8; Caes., *B.G.*, II, 33; III, 16; Dion. of Hal., *R.A.*, IV, 24.

⁴Sex. Aur. Victor, *De Viris Illustr.*—*Tib. Semp. Gracch.*

⁵Appian, *De Bell. Mith.*, 78.

⁶Polyb., X, xvii, 9; Livy, XXVI, xlvii, 2.

⁷Strabo, *Geog.*, XIV, p. 668.

⁸Plaut., *Capt.*, 333-4.

⁹Cic., *Pro A. Caec.*, XIX, 55.

and cook the daily food of the household.¹ Among females of this class weaving was a common occupation.² Plautus enumerates among the retinue of a courtesan wardrobe-women, bath-attendants, guardians of jewellery, fan-carriers, sandal-bearers, singers, purse-attendants, and messengers.³ Rich men possessed not only cooks, bakers, and litter-bearers, but scores of musicians and other entertainers to tickle their fancies.⁴ Some were smiths, plasterers, or bailiffs.⁵ Crassus had about five hundred in his *familia* who were carpenters and masons, and many who could serve as readers, amanuenses, book-keepers, stewards and cooks.⁶ The rich used them instead of free men to cultivate their land. Thus, as we have seen, Cato's method of farming was based entirely on such labour. After agriculture began to decline they were employed more extensively and served as labourers and herdsmen on the large estates.⁷ In Varro's time most shepherds were not free men,⁸ an evil which Caesar tried to check by obliging proprietors to employ at least one-third free labour.⁹ A still greater number of slaves was required after the introduction of aviaries, parks and fish-ponds.¹⁰ Slaves often managed the affairs of their masters. That in many instances they were both capable and faithful may be inferred from the testimony of Roman history and Latin literature; we need mention no more than the slave of Regulus, the great Roman commander in Africa, Gripus in the *Rudens*, and Tyndarus in the *Captivi* of Plautus.¹¹ The chief writers on Roman agri-

¹Plaut., *Merc.*, 391.

²Plaut., *Merc.*, 512 ; *Menaech.*, 784.

³Plaut., *Trinum.*, 251-4.

⁴Cic., *Pro Sex. Rosc.*, XLVI, 133-4.

⁵Cic., *Pro Cn. Planc.*, XXV, 62.

⁶Plut., *Crass.*, II, 4 et 6.

⁷Varro, *R.R.*, I, ii, 17 ; Appian, *De Bell. Civ.*, I, vii.

⁸We conclude this from conditions of sale for shepherds (Varro, *R.R.*, II, x, 4-5).

⁹Suet., *J. Caes.*, XLII.

¹⁰Varro, *R.R.*, III, iii, 4.

¹¹Val. Max., *Memor.*, IV, iv, 6 ; Plaut., *Menaech.*, 947-0 ; *Rudens*, 903-7 ; *Capt.*, 671-3 ; Cato the censor used to lend money to his slaves to invest in boys. These they trained and sold for him at a great profit. (Plut., *Cato Mai.*, XXI, 7).

culture, Cato, Varro and Columella, are unanimous in their preference of slave to free labour, except where the district is unhealthy, and the operation on hand is too large for the ordinary household to undertake.¹

The state, too, possessed its public slaves, either captured in war or purchased.² At times, to reward private slaves for conspicuous devotion or patriotism, the state purchased them, that is, made them public slaves, and then manumitted them. In this way, freedom was given to the thirty slaves, who in 210 B.C. saved the temple of Vesta from fire,³ and to the two slaves who exposed the conspiracy of 198 B.C.⁴ Again, to fight in the legions was the privilege of the Roman citizen alone. Service in the navy, however, was always distasteful. The latter sphere of activity, therefore, was assigned largely to freedmen and slaves, and such in the Punic war were the rowers and sailors.⁵ It was, indeed, only at a time of great extremity, as after Cannae, that public slaves in the army would be tolerated.⁶ They were used, nevertheless, as auxiliary employees in war, for Scipio kept for his service two thousand artisans of Cartagena, whom he had declared public slaves.⁷ In attendance upon the generals and magistrates were state slaves,⁸ such as he who carried the mantle and libation vessels for Cato when he was governor of Sardinia.⁹ They were engaged also in the service of the curule aediles¹⁰ and tribunes,¹¹ as scribes in the *tabularium* of the censors¹² and in the completion of decrees in the senate, with the exception, however, that the senators themselves, to preserve secrecy, wrote the *senatus consultum tacitum*.¹³ Public slaves

¹Cato, *R.R.*, V. 4 ; Varro, *R.R.*, I, xvii, 2 ; Col., *R.R.*, I, vii, 4-5.

²Halkin, *Les Esclaves Publics chez les Romains*.

³Livy, XXVI, xxvii, 4 et 9.

⁴Livy, XXXII, xxvi, 14.

⁵Livy, XXIV, xl, 7-9 ; XXVI, xxxv, 2-3 ; XXXIV, vi, 13.

⁶Servius, *ad Aen.*, IX, 544 ; Livy, XXII, lvii, 11.

⁷Polyb., X, xvii, 9 ; Livy, XXVI, xlvii, 2.

⁸Aul. Gell., *Noct. Attic.*, X, iii, 19.

⁹Plut., *Cato Mai.*, VI, 2.

¹⁰Varro, *R.R.*, I, ii, 2.

¹¹Livy, XXXVIII, li, 2 ; Lydus, *De Mag. Reip. Rom.*, I, 44.

¹²Livy, XLIII, xvi, 13.

¹³J. Capit., *Gord.*, c. 12.

served in religious rites either directly to minister, or indirectly as attendants on priests. The censor, Appius Claudius, in 310 B.C. counselled the Potitii, who presided over the worship of Hercules, to transmit to public slaves the cult of that god.¹ They were placed about the gate and walls to serve in fire-brigades.² We cannot doubt that they were used extensively in the construction and repair of temples, roads and sewers. At any rate, we know that the contractors of the aqueducts had to inscribe on official lists under the supervision of magistrates the names of all the slaves employed.³

The price of slaves under the Republic cannot be stated precisely. The comedies of Plautus, however, contain references to a considerable number of sales. Thus a young child fetches six minae, a vigorous and full-grown slave twenty minae in the *Captivi*;⁴ in the *Poenulus* two small girls and a nurse sell for eighteen minae;⁵ twenty minae is the price of a beautiful slave in the *Pseudolus*;⁶ twenty minae is demanded for a girl in the *Asinaria*.⁷ An amusing scene is depicted in the *Mercator*, where keen competition raises the price of a girl slave from twenty to one hundred minae;⁸ while in the *Persa* the purchaser succeeded in reducing the price of a slave from one hundred to sixty minae.⁹ Thirty minae in the *Mostellaria*,¹⁰ forty¹¹ and fifty¹² in the *Epidicus*, and a talent in the *Rudens*,¹³ *Aulularia*,¹⁴ and *Captivi*¹⁵ are prices quoted for slaves. Cato the censor never paid more than

¹Livy, I, vii, 12-4; Dion. of Hal., *R.A.*, I, xl; Serv., *ad Aen.*, VIII, 179; VIII, 269.

²*Dig.*, I, 15, 1.

³Front., *De Aqued.*, XCVI.

⁴352-3; 973-4.

⁵896-9.

⁶51-2.

⁷227-8.

⁸422-435.

⁹658-665.

¹⁰293.

¹¹53.

¹²347.

¹³1316-7.

¹⁴301-2.

¹⁵273.

1,500 drachmae for one.¹ In his time, however, a handsome slave occasionally sold for more than a farm.² Julius Caesar paid such extravagant prices for young slaves of ability that he forbade the items to be entered in his accounts.³ They were always a valuable asset, and even in the provinces formed a considerable portion of the fortune of those who trafficked and lent money at interest.⁴

The slave had no legal rights. He was not a person, "*persona*," but a thing, "*res*," a piece of property, an "*instrumentum vocale*" as opposed to the ox, which is "*semi-vocale*," or a wagon which is "*mutum*."⁵ Thus Cato recommends to sell the old and diseased slave as ruthlessly as the useless ox, the old wagon, or the old iron tool.⁶ Profit was Cato's ultimate aim. The children of his slaves, therefore, he caused to be suckled by his wife to inspire within them a fondness for his family.⁷ He regulated most carefully the quantity of bread and wine, meat and clothing to be given to the slave-labourers.⁸ To the sick, however, the *vilicus* was not allowed to apportion the ordinary quantity of provisions.⁹ This system of exploiting the life of the slave gave place, fortunately, to a more enlightened and benevolent philanthropy; and in Varro's time they received much more kindly treatment. We must not suppose, however, that their condition in Cato's time was intolerable, for he himself ate and drank the same coarse victuals as they.¹⁰ But Varro is anxious to have them well cared for. "Slaves ought to be neither timid nor bold," he declared. The character of the overseer caused him some concern. They should be steeped in literature, honest, older than the *operarii*, and should possess a practical knowledge of agriculture. Slaves should be restrained by words rather

¹Plut., *Cato Mai.*, IV, 4.

²Polyb., XXXI, 24.

³Suet., *J. Caes.*, xlvii.

⁴Plut., *Cato Mai.*, LXI, 1.

⁵Varro, *R.R.*, I, xvii, 1.

⁶Cato, *R.R.*, II, 7.

⁷Plut., *Cato Mai.*, XX, 3.

⁸Cato, *R.R.*, LVI-LIX.

⁹Cato, *R.R.*, II, 4.

¹⁰Plut., *Cato Mai.*, III, 2.

than by blows. Those in charge should receive rewards, should be allowed to gather a *peculium*, and should be permitted to have wives.¹ This humanitarian tendency continued to the time of Columella, who favoured a certain friendliness of intercourse with the farm slaves.² He expected that the master should have some solicitude for those in bondage. "A diligent master," he stated, "should inquire both of the slaves themselves and of the free servants, in whom greater confidence may be reposed, as to whether they receive their full allowance. He himself should taste and prove the quality of their victuals and drink, and should examine their clothes, mittens and shoes."³ Nothing will better indicate the improvement of their condition than a comparison of the attitudes of the three great Roman rural economists towards the *contubernium* of slaves. Cato permitted cohabitation, but only in return for a money-payment from the *peculium*.⁴ Varro, however, recommends marriage as an incentive to faithful service.⁵ To Columella the fruit of such intercourse was sufficient motive to encourage it. Relaxation from toil and even liberty should be the reward, he claimed, of the prolific mother.⁶

The position of the slave was materially relieved by the prospect of freedom. The large number of festivals and holy days mitigated his toil. He was often manumitted by his master ; occasionally out of his *peculium*, or private earnings, he even bought his liberty.⁷ To prevent manumissions a five per cent. tax was imposed. As early as 356 B.C. the revenue derived from this source was considerable.⁸

The economic result of the great increase in the number of slaves is important. Slave cultivation discredited farming for all free men; slave competition impoverished and crushed

¹Varro, *R.R.*, I, xvii, 5.

²Col., *R.R.*, I, viii, 15.

³Col., *R.R.*, I, viii, 18.

⁴Plut., *Cato Mai.*, XXI, 2.

⁵Varro, *R.R.*, I, xviii, 5 ; II, x, 6.

⁶Col., *R.R.*, I, viii, 19.

⁷Plaut., *Trinum.*, 566 ; *Poenul.*, 23-4 : 518-20.

⁸Livy, VII, xvi, 7.

out of existence the smaller husbandmen, the sinews of the Roman state.¹ In the mob support given to unscrupulous leaders in the party struggles of the last century of the Republic the slaves were not only a disturbing element but an active force that aided in the disaster of the commonwealth ; Marius and Catiline availed themselves of their assistance to swell their following. Slavery was a festering sore in the state.²

j. Increasing Insalubrity

In its train of evils the decline of agriculture brought for Italy increasing insalubrity. In Cato's time a purchaser of a farm is greatly concerned about the healthful character of the district ;³ with reference to the construction of a new farm-house, he remarks,⁴ "The prices above quoted have been adjudged for a healthful district and an upright master. The wages shall be in accordance with a sealed contract. But, where the district is pestilential and operations must be interrupted in the summer, then, when the master is just, let one quarter be added to the price."

As the small estates disappeared, land went out of cultivation with disastrous results to the general health of Italy. When the Romans farmed, Varro believed their health was better.⁵ He has much to say about pestilential districts, for "a pestilential soil, however fertile, gives the cultivator no opportunity to enjoy the fruit of his labour. For where mortality is not reckoned on, not only is the product of the farm uncertain, but the life of the husbandman is precarious."⁶ Cicero, too, bears witness to the unhealthy character of portions of Italy in his day.⁷ The "aria cattiva" was spreading desolation. Stagnant water and mosquitoes were undermining the health of Italy.⁸

¹Col., *R.R.*, I, *Praef.*, 3.

²Plut., *Sulla*, IX, 7 ; Sallust, *Cat.*, xxiv et lvi.

³Cato, *R.R.*, I, 2 et 3.

⁴Cato, *R.R.*, XIV, 5.

⁵Varro, *R.R.*, II, *Praef.*, 2.

⁶Varro., *R.R.*, I, iv, 3.

⁷Cic., *De Leg. Agr.*, II, 26-27 ; 36 98.

⁸Varro, *R.R.*, I, xi, 2-xii, 4.

CONCLUSION

So far as we can ascertain, this people began their career as a shepherd-folk of the Stone Age. By the time of the Servian organization however, agriculture, with its ideal of the independence of the *fundus*, had gained a firm foothold in the state. The aspiration to have the household self-contained restricted the rise of handicraft industry within the limits of the farm, rendered trade useless and extensive commerce impossible. A larger development of agriculture followed as this ideal became less and less a reality. That the aim of independence was still potent, nevertheless, will account for the fact that the trades were regarded with strong disfavour, and retail business relegated to landless plebeians and strangers, while commerce on a large scale did not advance beyond shipments by the owners of large estates.

Before the abolition of the kingship certain definite trades had grown up. Rome had manifested some activity in bronze and pottery, under the direction of Etruscan engineers had effected considerable building, and had developed her agricultural exports from Latium to a degree which rendered it necessary to define clearly her commercial relations with Carthage. But Rome, at the beginning of the fifth century B.C., was mainly agricultural.

The distracting conflicts that marked the two centuries and a half that intervened between the establishment of the Republic and the inception of Rome's struggle with Carthage forbade any development of industry or commerce, but gave her social solidarity within the city, and hegemony in Italy. In this period, Rome's greatest economic problem, her land question, caused a crisis in domestic affairs. The small proprietors, compelled to serve in their country's legions, returned from long and arduous campaigns only to find their fields untilled, the large land-owners encroaching on their petty estates, and themselves forced to borrow from wealthy neighbours all too eager to place them at a disadvantage. During the struggle against actual oppression the decemviral legislation put custom into law, ratified what had been usual, instituted definite means for redress, and eased the position of

the poor. Nearly a century later, the Licinian laws carried by a union of the oppressed plebeian poor with the wealthy, ambitious members of the same order, produced not an adequate solution of the land question—it was never solved—but sufficient harmony within the state to enable Rome to withstand her foes, and, by the consequent extension of her territory, to postpone consideration of the land question until the time of the Gracchi, when it was an evil no longer confined to Rome, but affecting all Italy.

The first Punic war marks an important epoch in Rome's history—the beginning of her Mediterranean expansion and transmarine rule. There is nothing that is more remarkable in the last two hundred and fifty years of the Republic than the marvellous growth of riches and luxury in Rome. To fathom the cause of this is the problem for the student of Rome's economic conditions.

The explanation of the growth in wealth we cannot find in any development of agriculture. It would seem to be the case that both the theory and the practice of Roman husbandry were fairly adequate. The Roman agricultural writers, in their endeavours to improve farming methods, have left behind them pictures of model farms. By these occasional glimpses of actual conditions it would seem that Roman agricultural methods are characterized by a sufficiently intelligent appreciation of a farm's needs even if they sometimes entailed an unnecessary expenditure of labour. The equipment and the cultivation, the ploughing, drainage, and irrigation, the manuring, sowing, and rotation of the crops, are by no means inadequate. The introduction of capital, the increase in the number of slaves, the importation of corn from the provinces, produced a further extension of large estates, in which speculative farming first gave itself up to the specialized production of oil and wine, and then substituted grazing for agriculture. The concurrent ruin of the small farmer and the shifting of the population from the rural districts to the metropolis will lead us to the conviction that agriculture was not responsible for Rome's growth in riches.

It would be equally vain to try to account for the increase of wealth by any reference to an increasing commercial or

industrial activity. Commerce was denied her nobles, and Rome's mercantile activity was at best largely a commerce of food importation. Roman industrial enterprise, moreover, though it gave a reputation to certain towns within the peninsula, was too intimately associated with the Roman *fundus* or the slave workshop of a Crassus to admit of an advance beyond handicraft industry.

Not to her Italian agriculture, then, nor to her manufactures, nor to her industries or commerce can we attribute the increase in Roman wealth, but to the exploitation of her provinces. The plunder gained by generals in their conquest, the wealth acquired by the not over scrupulous joint-stock companies in the farming of Rome's provincial revenues, the fortunes amassed by individual speculators and *negotiatores* in enterprises operated under the protection of Rome's deputed governors, the extortions as well as the legitimate gains, not only of Rome's representatives and administrators, but also of the young Romans who danced attendance upon proconsuls—this was the price which the province paid for government by the imperial city, the true explanation of the wealth that was enriching the coffers, and sapping the moral vigour of the Roman people.

If Rome's riches grew and her dominions extended, she paid heavily for it in the deterioration of her morals and the complete pauperization of her democracy. Extravagances produced burdensome loads of debt;¹ largesses and public distributions of corn debauched the people.² All Mediterranean civilization ran quickly towards the extinction of middle classes, but the scale is greater in Rome. Though legislation against bribery was introduced again and again,³ the voters of the metropolis went to the elections to be bought; for one single consulship was paid 800 talents⁴—a sum only a trifle less than \$1,000,000. Habits became corrupt. Even in old Cato's time was uttered the complaint that the vastness

¹Sallust, *Cat.*, XVI.

²Pseudo-Sallust, *Ep. ad Caes.*,

³Plut., *Cat. Min.*, XLIX, 3.

⁴Appian, *De Bell. Civ.*, II, 19.

of Rome's conquests had left no room for her primitive purity and integrity.¹ The verdict of Jugurtha is justified : "*urbem venalem et mature perituram, si emptorem invenerit.*"²

The last century of the Republic was marked by extreme disorder. Upon the general unrest and excitement of Rome's conquests and struggles in three continents followed hard the insecurity and uneasiness bred by civil troubles and seditions. Most disastrous to Rome were the destruction and hatred that remained as the evil legacies from the civil wars. They subverted agriculture,³ and exhausted Italy;⁴ they rendered property insecure through the confiscations to which the defeated partisans were subjected;⁵ they entailed enormous private losses,⁶ and endangered the city's food supply.⁷ The inevitable remedy was at hand. Caius Gracchus was the forerunner of Caesar in discerning that new fields must be opened for Italians,—really the beginning of Europe. Pompey's success against the pirates, Julius Caesar's extinction of company plundering, his energetic measures and effective control of Rome,⁸ served to pave the way for the assumption of power by Augustus. To maintain order, to establish security, to prevent extortion, to foster measures of reform, a strong hand was demanded at this juncture; and as an economic and moral necessity, for Rome and the provinces alike, the Empire was established.

¹Plut., *Cat. Mai.*, IV, 2.

²Sallust, *Bell. Jug.*, XXXV.

³Appian, *De Bell. Civ.*, V, 18.

⁴Appian, *De Bell. Civ.*, IV, 5.

⁵Appian, *De Bell. Civ.*, II, 140; Hor., *Sat.*, II, 2, 114-5; Cic., *De Offic.*, I, 14, 43; *Pro Q. Rosc. Com.*, XII, 33; *Pro P. Sulla*, XXV, 71; *Ep. ad Fam.*, VII, 3, 3; XI, 20, 3.

⁶Cic., *De Dom. sua*, 58, 146; *Ep. ad Fam.*, XI, 10, 5.

⁷Cic., *Ep. ad Att.*, XIV, 3, 1.

⁸Suet., *J. Caes.*, XLII.

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